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CAMPAIGN: Residents tell of the problems afflicting the Coleman Crescent play area

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THE MESSAGE IS CLEAR

After years of neglect and little investment, a community is demanding action at its local park. The problems at the Coleman Crescent recreation area have angered residents on the Whitehall estate in Northwood and they have started a petition to try to get improvements. The residents blame Thanet council for many of the problems and are calling on the authority to invest time and money into the cause. One woman says that children play in the roads outside because they cannot use the park, while much of the equipment is old, damaged or vandalised.

■ BY TOM BETTS

PEOPLE on a Ramsgate estate are demanding that their local park is rescued from thugs.

Residents in Whitehall say that they have had enough of the poor state of the Coleman Crescent recreation area and want action from Thanet council.

The rec has become a problem area for members of the community, many of whom are now saying "enough is enough".

They have told Yourthanet that the problem of loutish behaviour means children are too scared to play in the park.

Motorbikes are brought on to and ridden on the grass, often at night, and dogs are let off their leads to wreak havoc on the swings, say the worried residents.

Owners reportedly use the swings to train breeds such as Staffordshire bull terriers, or 'staffies', to strengthen their jaws.

Meanwhile, dog-fouling bins have been burnt out, meaning that there is nowhere to dispose of animals' mess.

And now a group of neighbours has got together to tell their ward councillor, Mark Nottingham, of the problems they face.

Mother-of-two April Yeomans said: "It's a disgrace here now. We want a nice area to bring our kids to, but after years of asking for it we still don't have one."

Among the improvements the group wants to see are CCTV and lighting to deter antisocial behaviour and vandalism, better boundary fencing and more benches.

They also want metal dog bins and for the park to be locked at night.

Some 200 signatures have been added to a petition started to draw attention to the problems.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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MESSAGE: Joseph Andrews, Shipona Akthar and Jade Duggan created the artwork

Young artists drawing up a new message

■ BY TOM BETTS

A NEW way of tackling graffiti is being taken into secondary schools and colleges by the Thanet Community Safety Partnership.

A community safety officer has been visiting schools to highlight the penalties for criminal damage and to promote the other activities that are available to young people.

This has led to a community project by students at King Ethelbert School in Birchington who are looking at how they can get across the voice of today's young people as part of their GCSE Citizenship course.

Joseph Andrews, Shipona Akthar and Jade Duggan, all aged 15, volunteered and worked with Street Art Studio, a local art group.

They helped to complete a mural which promotes the message to "look beyond the image, see the real person".

Other students came up with the design, which shows a person in a hooded top on one side of the mural, while the other side shows the per-

son underneath the hoodie, an ordinary young person. They also completed a survey about the perceptions of young people.

Joseph said: "We wanted to show you can't judge a book by its cover."

"The idea behind the design is to get the message out that you should not stereotype young people."

"Just because we wear hoodies doesn't mean we cause trouble."

Community Safety Officer Jessica Bailey said: "We want to get the message across that young people care about the community."

"From the work we've done with young people, it's become very apparent that, far from what is often perceived, many have exactly the same concerns as older generations."

"They're worried about antisocial behaviour and community safety, as well as being frustrated that perceptions of young people are sometimes negative."

It is hoped that the artwork can be exhibited in the new year.

MP joins the campaign to improve park

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

Karen Smith also highlighted some of the problems.

She said: "People have been coming into our sheds to steal things, we get abused and sworn at and so much more."

"Kids are playing in the street because their parents keep them away, there's nothing for them to enjoy."

She added: "We pay our council tax and we'd like to see this place brought up to the standard of Dane Park in Margate."

Cllr Nottingham added: "You only have to look at what is happening in Thanet to see there is less going on in Ramsgate than in Margate."

"I've no objection to improvements in Margate so long as we also get them here, but in my view that is not the case. This place has been neglected for years."

Thanet South's Labour MP Steve Ladyman is also backing the campaign.

He said: "The place needs some serious tidying up and some extra facilities."

"Ninety-eight per cent of the people who use this place do so in the right way and they are passionate about it. They shouldn't lose it for the sake of one or two."

At the time of publication, Thanet council had yet to respond to this newspaper's questions about the matter.

Football fans escorted home

POLICE were called to Hartsdown Park at the weekend as trouble flared at a football match.

Some 30 fans at the Margate versus Dover Athletic game on Saturday tried to re-enter the ground, becoming aggressive towards stewards on duty after the final whistle.

They were escorted back to Dover on the train by officers.

No arrests were made.

Dover won the Ryman Premier Division game 2-0 in front of a crowd of more than 1,300.

On Thanet rivals Ramsgate FC's website forum, one fan wrote that he thought alcohol was to blame for any problems as only home fans were allowed access to the bar and some visiting Dover fans were "tanked up" before the match had even started.

Ramsgate play Dover Athletic on Saturday, January 31.

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Pilot builds his own dream

Round-the-world trip to be taken in home-made plane

BY TOM BETTS

WHILE some of us bank on taking it easy when we retire, a pilot who grew up in the isle is planning on fulfilling the ambition of a lifetime.

Patrick Elliott is leaving his job with British Airways in March to embark on a round-the-world trip in a plane he built with his own hands.

The 54-year-old former Thanet schoolboy and his partner Linda could embark on their trip this year in the 12ft-long, 30ft-wide Long-EZ craft and plan to dedicate their journey to Patrick's former Air Training Corps squadron.

The two-seater machine is the result of 16 years of painstaking work by Patrick, who built it alone in a garage with the use of just a book and plans.

Patrick said: "The job has changed so much over the years - I love flying but feel it's time to move on. It has become a lot less personal, so that is really why I started building an aeroplane.

"It's almost getting back to my roots and allowing me to get back to actual aircraft handling because you don't do as much of that in long-haul scenarios."

He added: "The plane is superb to fly, cruises well at 170mph, handles well and is quite economical."

The flight will not be a continuous journey as the pair will stop in various places en route, but they still plan to navigate their way across the globe.



HIGH-FLIER: Patrick Elliott built his Long-EZ plane in his garage over the course of 16 years - in his upcoming retirement he plans to fly round the world in it with his wife, Linda

He has been living in Reigate, near Gatwick Airport, a location convenient for his job as a pilot, but it was on the isle that he discovered his love of the skies.

He said: "My interest started through my best friend at primary school, Peter Brace. His father owned some hotels locally and decided to buy a plane."

"He flew a twin-engine yellow plane called a Miles Gemini 1A, flying it out of Ramsgate Municipal Airport up by the water tower. He asked if I'd like to fly in it one day and after I'd

managed to persuade my parents we flew from Manston to Ramsgate, a journey which took about five minutes.

"I was hooked. I flew with both him and Peter many times after that."

When he was 13, Patrick joined the Air Training Corps 438 Squadron at Margate, developing his skills as a pilot in his own right.

He said: "I was a member for many years and I went up through the ranks. At 16 I started to pilot gliders solo at West Malling, probably around 1970, and then a year later I

was fortunate to gain a flying scholarship with the air force.

"I was able to take a course in Jersey and I applied to the BA college in Hamble to be a passenger jet pilot. I graduated in March 1975."

He added: "I've flown all over the world but owe the Air Training Corps a huge debt of thanks, really... they started me off and made it happen for me."

The Long-EZ may eventually be hangared at Manston airport.

Ladyman named in critical report

A COMMITTEE of MPs has warned that weak rules are allowing former ministers to exploit contacts made while they were in office.

The Public Administration Committee says that ministers such as Thanet South's Dr Steve Ladyman (Labour), a former transport minister, should be subject to tougher regulations monitored by an independent watchdog.

The MP's name was dragged into the row last year when he was criticised for appearing to promote the interests of a private firm to the Highways Agency.

Dr Ladyman had been subject to a lobbying ban after leaving his post but was still able to arrange meetings with officials for when it ended.

The report says that Dr Ladyman used his former role "as a way of introducing himself when lobbying" for a traffic information company.

The isle MP insists he did nothing improper and was never found guilty of any wrongdoing, but the committee cited the case in its report published earlier this week. The committee's chairman, Tony Wright, said: "Lobbying enhances democracy, but it can also subvert it. Transparency is key here."

"There is a public interest in knowing who is lobbying whom about what."

Pair Rendezvous over development of cliff-top area

TWO Thanet councillors are calling for a Rendezvous rethink.

Labour's Clive Hart and Iris Johnston are opponents of the current plans for the site at the bottom of Fort Hill and argue that the current KCC and TDC plans to build the Turner Contemporary gallery on the site is "over-development of the car park and cliff-top areas".

They say it would take away valuable parking spaces and destroy a much-loved public view, although they say they are not opposed to the construction of the gallery.

The pair say forced changes and unforeseen cutbacks to the joint TDC and KCC plans to develop the Rendezvous car park and top end of Fort Hill in Margate could actually work in favour of local people.

Cllr Johnston said: "TDC and KCC ruling Conservative members desperately need to manage the latest changes and challenges. Both councils need to communicate better with each other and all of us who

have to live with their 'bright' and very expensive ideas."

Both are now repeating their original request to keep as much of the Rendezvous car park as possible and create a prominent public viewing area at the top of Fort Hill.

Cllr Hart said: "Developers may be disappointed that much of the original project now looks unlikely, but residents and tourism could benefit through any reinstatement of parking and a well-designed cliff-top public viewing area."

The councillors have sent communications to the respective chief executives at KCC and TDC.

These ask for a rethink of the project and restate the request for a "less expensive, more practical and common-sense solution for use of the land at both sea and cliff-top levels".

The Turner Contemporary will eventually rise from the ground at the site. Building got under way in November and the work is due for completion in 2011.



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NEWS IN BRIEF**Stimulating sessions will bridge art and craft gap**

ADULTS with special needs will benefit from weekly art and craft sessions with artist Penny Blaney.

The evening sessions are being organised by Hereson House in Turner Street, Ramsgate, and start on Tuesday, January 20.

The classes are designed to support the needs of adults with disabilities in safe surroundings.

Michael Gregory, manager of Hereson House, said: "The aim is to bridge the gap in the provision of quality programmes for adults with special needs."

"Such activities have proven successful with children and adults with disabilities and we hope the art and craft evenings will be helpful in stimulating their minds and bodies."

Scheme becomes centre of attention for planners

PLANS to redevelop part of Newington have moved a step forward.

Thanet council cabinet members have been told that a scheme for The Centre will help to tackle antisocial behaviour by redeveloping homes and shops.

A formal decision to redevelop the Ramsgate site was taken in December.

The work will be carried out by Town and Country Housing, one of the council's preferred partner-registered social landlords.

The proposal is to demolish The Centre and replace it with a mixed scheme of houses and six flats. There is also the possibility of including a medical centre.

A planning application is expected in the spring.

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GLORIA JOINS THE ARMY

Picture: MAX LOWN



Television presenter Gloria Hunniford joined the Margate Citadel Salvation Army for its charity Christmas carol concert at the Winter Gardens.

The event was the 47th annual show and raised more than £1,400 for the Caron Keating Foundation.

The Christmas Unwrapped concert was billed as a "seasonal journey to discover the true meaning of Christmas underneath the tinsel and decorations".

Ms Keating - Gloria's daughter - died in 2004, aged just 41.

The former Blue Peter presenter had been suffering from breast cancer and a foundation was set up in her name to offer financial backing to professional carers, complementary healing practitioners and support groups dealing with cancer patients.

It also helps individuals and families affected by the disease.

Gloria, 68, told the audience about the times she attended the Salvation Army in Northern Ireland as a child, as well as other memories of meeting Salvation Army members throughout her career.

Airport plans a flight of fancy, say groups

■ BY STEVE KNIGHT

PROPOSALS to expand Kent International Airport at Manston have been attacked by environmental campaigners.

Owner Infratil says it wants to build a new terminal and extend the runway to help accommodate millions of extra passengers over the next 25 years, but Kent Green Party and the Campaign to Protect Rural England both say the proposals are unrealistic.

They have submitted responses to the New Zealand-based firm as part of its masterplan consultation process.

Steve Dawe, of Kent Green Party, said the draft plan, which was published in October, took no account of the contraction in the civil aviation industry.

He said: "Coupled with the recession, which is already beginning to reduce the number of flights, plans for Manston airport to expand

are - literally - flights of fancy. We have recommended the owners consider leisure uses for the site, bearing in mind initiatives taken at Dreamland in Margate and in other coastal towns to improve leisure options in east Kent.

"Some of the site could also be returned to agriculture. There are always calls for more allotments and seed sales for growing food have risen dramatically.

"Why shouldn't Manston have much quieter and less polluting contributions to make in future?"

Infratil wants to see one million passengers pass through the airport each year by 2011, and two million by 2013.

By 2033, the company says that figure could rise to six million if plans to add to its list of flight destinations come to fruition.

It says that such an expansion could create 7,500 jobs, which is a huge increase on the 93 now employed at the 800-acre site.

Freight flights would also increase, from the current 33,000-tonne handling figure to 100,000 tonnes in 2010, then 150,000 tonnes in 2012.

Chris Lowe, chairman of CPRE Kent's transport group, said: "The masterplan is full of aspirations but very light on justification."

"It is impossible to see what the impacts of such major growth will be - not only on Thanet, but on Kent and beyond - as the necessary supporting work has not been done."

"As it stands, the masterplan raises more questions than it provides answers."

Kent International chief executive Matt Clarke said: "The consultation period ended on December 19 and submissions have been received."

"They will be considered before we release the final version of the masterplan."



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Alliance's 'non-job' attack rejected by health trust

A LOCAL health post has been branded one of the "Top Ten Non-Jobs of 2008" by the Taxpayers' Alliance.

The alliance, which monitors public spending, nominated the role of equality and diversity manager at the East Kent Hospitals University NHS Trust, which covers Thanet, in its list.

This was alongside such positions as street football co-ordinator for a Scottish council and London-based community space challenge co-ordinator and enviro-crime officer.

The group said the job in Kent commanded a salary of between £29,091 and £38,352.

It is now being advertised and its description is "to 'embed' equality and diversity practices in the Trust".

Alliance chief executive Matthew Elliott said the list had been put together to show the

■ BY NICK AMES

"economic divide" which exists between the public and private sectors.

He said: "In times of economic hardship it is important that the public sector tightens its belt, just as families are having to.

"With the public finances in such a mess, taxpayers can't afford for quangos and councils to splash out on non-jobs that would be an indulgence even in good times."

But the NHS Trust said the position was an important one because of the wide range of people with which it dealt.

A spokesman said: "The trust is in the process of creating this important post in order to help us to continue to provide a comprehensive, first-class healthcare service which will understand and cater for the needs of all sections of the population we serve.

"Research has shown that disadvantaged groups bear an overproportional share of health problems, frequently negatively affected by the way institutions, policies and practices organise and deliver health services.

"Health disparities are noted in social and economic exclusion, which are inextricably linked to racism and other forms of discrimination. Services need to respond differently to these minority groups and the problems they have accessing healthcare.

"To achieve this aim, the trust is determined to maintain a level playing field for access to healthcare and to ensure everyone who either seeks our help or works for us is treated with equal respect and that the dignity of all our patients and staff is upheld at all times."

He added that the post would also enable the Trust to meet its requirements under various Acts of Parliament which have been brought in over recent years or been amended.

Staking your claim

PENSIONERS and those on low incomes are being encouraged by Thanet council to apply for help in paying their bills.

Nationally, an estimated four in ten pensioners are missing out on three-quarters of a billion pounds in council tax benefit.

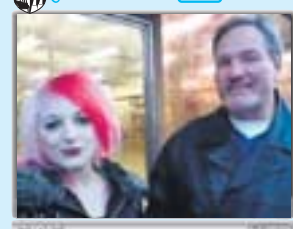
Fewer than half of home-owning pensioners are claiming money they are entitled to.

To find out if you are entitled to help, phone 01843 577000, or visit Gateway Plus in Cecil Square, Margate.

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Will 2009 provide isle artists the platform they crave? Search 'Turner'



MIX OF FOOTY AND RESPECT

Newington youngsters have been braving freezing temperatures to attend weekly football sessions.

Organised by Sport 4 NRG, the sessions have been held at Dame Janet Primary School on Mondays from 5.30pm-7.30pm for more than two years. The next is on Monday (January 12).

The sessions are free and have been attracting about 25 players each week, including girls.

James Gregory, of Sport 4 NRG, said: "The sessions are all about adding structure and routine for young people. We listen to the people who come along and treat them as individuals, not just a group of 'kids'.

"If we are willing to run around with them in the cold each week, which we do, then we gain their respect and that leads to appropriate behaviour. There's every chance that such behaviour will follow through into other aspects of their lives."

Six streets added to trading ban

RESTRICTIONS on street trading have been extended to another six isle roads.

The decision was taken at a full meeting of Thanet council last month.

The new restrictions bar street trading in Dumpton Park Drive in Broadstairs and Ramsgate; Church Street and Vicarage Street in St Peter's; St Mildred's Road in Westgate-on-Sea; and Waverley Road in Westbrook.

Thanet council first introduced such restrictions in 1998, when street trading was banned on more than 200 roads. A further 21 streets were added in 2005.

Most complaints are about cars for sale on the highway and usually focus on the nuisance the trade causes and the fact that buyers don't have the legal protection that they would have if they went to legitimate motor traders.

The council also receives complaints about mobile catering units in the street.

Cllr Jo Gideon, cabinet member for safer neighbourhoods, health and communities, said: "This is about responding to concerns that people have raised about street trading.

"We are aware there have been problems on some of the roads not covered by the existing ban.

"By adding these streets we can tackle the problems in these areas.

"We know that there is a chance the sale of vehicles on the highway could be displaced into other roads, but a district-wide ban is not appropriate.

"We have narrow streets with terrace housing and extending the ban will affect those who live there."

Shops in these streets that display goods outside their premises can continue to do so.

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Sat 21st February
Mr Wonderful Dancing
Sunday 22nd February
Televised British Wrestling
Friday 27th February
Colin Fry and TJ Higgs
Saturday 28th February
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MARCH 2009

Tuesday 3rd March
Billy Ocean in Concert
Friday 6th March
Another Schooltime Spectacular

"The American Dream"

Monday 9th - Wednesday 11th March
Jackyll & Hyde
Sunday 15th March
The All Stars Band
"20th Annual Charity Concert"

Friday 20th March

LEMAR in Concert
Saturday 21st March
Bjorn Again

APRIL 2009

Saturday 4th April
Disco Inferno
Sunday 5th April
The Enemy in Concert

Friday 10th & Saturday 11th April

Thanet Beer Festival
Saturday 18th April
Essence of Ireland
Sunday 19th April
Sooty In Space
MAY 2009
Wednesday 6th May
Rob Brydon
Sunday 10th May
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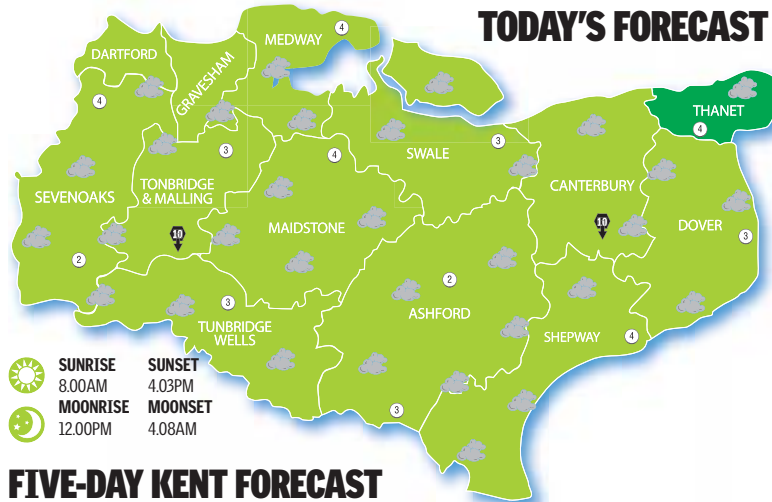
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TODAY'S FORECAST



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Chatham	Saturday	11.34am	5.8m
	Sunday	12.30am	6.1m
Dover	Saturday	10.04am	6.4m
	Sunday	10.58am	6.6m
Dungeness	Saturday	9.52am	7.3m
	Sunday	10.47am	7.6m
Ramsgate	Saturday	10.31am	4.8m
	Sunday	11.26am	5.0m
Sheerness	Saturday	11.31am	5.6m
	Sunday	12.27am	5.8m
Whitstable	Saturday	11.37am	5.2m
	Sunday	12.38am	5.4m

FIVE-DAY KENT FORECAST

	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon		Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon
Ashford	2°C	4°C	4°C	3°C	4°C	Gravesend	2°C	4°C	4°C	4°C	4°C
Canterbury	1°C	4°C	3°C	3°C	2°C	Maidstone	2°C	3°C	4°C	4°C	4°C
Chatham	2°C	4°C	4°C	4°C	4°C	Ramsgate	1°C	4°C	3°C	3°C	2°C
Dartford	2°C	4°C	4°C	4°C	4°C	Rochester	2°C	4°C	4°C	4°C	4°C
Dover	2°C	3°C	3°C	3°C	3°C	Sevenoaks	1°C	2°C	3°C	2°C	3°C
Faversham	2°C	4°C	4°C	4°C	4°C	Sittingbourne	2°C	4°C	4°C	4°C	4°C
Folkestone	2°C	3°C	3°C	3°C	3°C	Tonbridge	2°C	3°C	5°C	3°C	4°C
Gillingham	2°C	4°C	4°C	4°C	4°C	Tun Wells	2°C	3°C	5°C	3°C	4°C



AROUND THE WORLD YESTERDAY

Amsterdam	-1°C	Madrid	3°C
Athens	13°C	New York	2°C
Barcelona	9°C	Paris	-1°C
Beijing	-1°C	Rome	8°C
Bombay	29°C	Sydney	30°C
Cape Town	27°C	Tenerife	20°C
Cardiff	3°C	Tokyo	10°C
Gibraltar	14°C	Vancouver	3°C
Hong Kong	21°C	Warsaw	-1°C
Las Palmas	18°C	Wellington	19°C

Funding to boost disabled facilities

THANET has been awarded almost £300,000 in Government grants for disabled facilities.

For the year 2009-2010, the council will receive £897,000 from the Government, up from £600,000, the figure for the year 2008-2009.

The council is now planning to roll out a programme of disabled adaptation schemes which officers say will "be one of the biggest of any council in the South East".

Previously, 60 per cent of the money came from the Government, with 40 per cent of the funding coming from local authorities.

This system has now been dropped, but Thanet council is planning to commit £400,000 per year over the next three years.

In total, £1.2 million is allocated to funding Disabled Facilities Grants over the next three years, but the council's ability to fund the scheme will depend on the level of cash that it raises from asset sales.

Delighted

Cllr Zita Wiltshire, cabinet member for housing, said it was good news for disabled people in the isle.

She said: "The council has been lobbying for additional funds for this scheme over the last couple of years and we're delighted the Government has made Thanet a special case because of the high level of demand in the district."

She added: "Although this is an excellent increase, sadly it's nowhere near enough to tackle the full extent of the problem here."

"We have seen the demand for grants nearly double in the last two years, while at the same time, Government changes to the eligibility rules have added more than £100,000 a year to the cost of the scheme."

"Many vulnerable people still have to wait far too long to get vital adaptations done to their homes."

"We will continue to work with the Home Improvement Agency and colleagues in the occupational health service to ensure the most urgent cases are dealt with without delay."

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yourlocalinterview

QUESTION & ANSWER

LISA WELLS



Q Can you tell us about your role as fund-raising support assistant?

A My main duties as FSA are to provide support to two fund-raising managers and ensure the office runs smoothly.

Often I am the first point of contact, so I meet a diverse range of people. On a typical day I'll speak to volunteers such as committee members or our schools speaker, Macmillan staff and other supporters who may be doing anything from sponsored slims to running marathons to raise money.

I am also responsible for thanking donors and banking donations, writing press releases for our website, providing admin support during local and national events and solving practical problems in our office.

Every year, Macmillan holds collections at Tesco and Morrisons stores across Kent. I helped co-ordinate the Tesco collections in October which raised more than £16,000. Recently I have been working to deliver the same success at our Morrisons collections.

It is a varied role with lots of opportunities to meet supporters and attend events. It is challenging and demanding – no two days are the same – but also very rewarding.

Q Is working for a charity something you planned to do?

A After university, I found it extremely difficult to find a job without having real business experience.

It wasn't until a friend offered me some work experience at a charity called the Riverwood

Project that I decided I'd really like to pursue a career within the charity sector.

I approached Macmillan as a volunteer but was lucky enough to be offered a full-time position at the Kent office.

Q Tell us about Macmillan Cancer Support

A Macmillan provides practical, medical, emotional and financial support to people affected by cancer. We have set ourselves the ambition of reaching and improving the lives of everyone living with cancer by 2010.

At a local level we have more than 100 Kent-based Macmillan nurses, doctors and other health professionals such as our dietician and speech and language therapist, who have the expert knowledge to help make living with cancer easier.

In 2007, Macmillan gave more than £210,000 in small grants to about 600 Kent cancer patients. These grants can help cover the cost of transport to hospital, a warm duvet, or even a much-needed family holiday.

Q What is it like to work for such a worthwhile cause?

A It's a charity that is close to my heart and I'm sure this is the case for many people. I am always greeted very positively because people are so interested in the charity and want to support such a good cause.

Q Can you give us some examples of fund-raising events or activities that you have helped to organise?

A When I started with Macmillan in May 2008, I was involved with a sponsored walk at Penshurst Place, just four days prior to starting.

I helped as much as possible, putting together packs for the Army cadets and helping with admin for the day. It was great to see the team in action and to introduce myself to our supporters and volunteers.

I am very involved with our Medway group, which raises funds solely for the Macmillan Cancer Care Unit at Medway Maritime Hospital in Gillingham.

We organised a fund-raising day in October which made £500. I support the group by raising awareness of events, providing fund-raising materials and sourcing raffle prizes. Our Christmas fair included a perfume tombola from John Lewis. We raised more than £1,000, which was fantastic.

In September I hosted my own coffee morning as part of Macmillan's World's Biggest Coffee Morning. I organised games, raffles, food and drink. We raised £559.

Q What is the highest amount ever raised from an event?

A The highest amount I have received was £10,832 from the Rochester and Cobham Park Golf Club.

The captains at the club chose Macmillan as their charity of the year and worked tirelessly to produce this fantastic amount. The money was collected through fund-raising days, raffles, a hog roast and a silent auction.

Fund-raising support assistant Lisa Wells speaks to **Nick Ames** about the amazing work done by Macmillan nurses and why they need our help in easing the burden of people living with cancer

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Kieran Renihan, from Deal, reveals how to make natural chocolate. Search 'chocolate'



County MP **Damian Green** talks about what a new president means for America. Search 'Damian'



Hurting down the Cresta Run, Chatham, to the music of Queens Of The Stone Age. Search 'Cresta'

EDITOR'S CHOICE

You can view all these videos and others from around the county with the click of a mouse at...

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Water shortage fears for the Kent desert

BY NICK AMES

KENT falls into a part of the UK which has less water per head of population than that available to the inhabitants of largely desert countries Morocco and Egypt.

The county is one of the areas of "serious water stress" identified in an Environment Agency report on the state of the nation's supplies which states that in the event of a hot dry summer rationing and hosepipe bans would inevitably come into force.

The survey warns that many lakes, estuaries and rivers are drained so quickly to provide fresh water for Britain's growing population there is a danger to wildlife and public supplies during dry years.

The Environment Agency says people are still wasting too much water in their homes, while water companies are allowing supplies to escape from leaking pipes.

It calls for the speedier introduction of water meters such as those introduced in Folkestone and on Romney Marsh – and for more reservoirs and desalination plants to be considered only as a last resort.

Trevor Bishop, the head of water resources, said: "We are trying to change the way we manage water resources and put in place the right incentives for people to use less water."

"There are three main ways – metering of customers, tackling leakage and more water efficiency in the home."

According to the agency, homes with meters use 13 per cent less water than those paying fixed water rates.

Mr Bishop added: "We are calling for meters, but done in the right way."

The report says the pressure is greatest in the South East and warns that the risk of water shortages, hosepipe bans and other restrictions will increase in the next few decades.



LOW: Water levels have dropped at Bewl, meaning supplies have to be supplemented from other sources

"Over the next 30 years, there will be increasing pressures from the rising population and associated development," it states.

"Looking further ahead, the impact of climate change could have a major impact on the water available for all uses."

Computer forecasts of climate change suggest winters will be wetter on average in Britain but summers will be drier, particularly in the South East.

Compared to the rest of Europe, water resources are under greater stress only in drier countries such as Cyprus, Malta, Spain and Italy, the report added.

In recent years hosepipe bans have been introduced in the summer across much of the county and supplies – including those drawn from Bewl Water – have had to be supplemented by river water from the Medway.



MEATY: Chris Rook (centre) presents Florence Neves and her son Michael with their festive hamper

A prize turkey

ONE lucky KOS Media reader had a tasty Christmas to remember after winning a food-lovers' competition in our newspapers.

Butcher JC Rook and Sons, which has shops across the county, offered a luxury hamper worth more than £1,000 to make sure the winner enjoyed the festive period in style.

More than 2,500 readers entered competition, but it was Florence Neves and her son Michael from Sittingbourne who took home the turkey.

Other tasty treats included Kent-reared beef, pork and lamb, a goose, smoked salmon, cheeses, cakes, biscuits and of course wines, whiskey, brandy and port.

Drop in stab deaths

FIVE people were stabbed to death on the streets of Kent and Medway last year, new figures have revealed.

The Conservatives found that the number of fatal stabbings in England and Wales during 2007-08 had reached a record high with five people a week nationally losing their lives to knife crime.

Figures for Kent Police showed five people had been killed due to knife violence in 2007-08, down from six in 2006-07.

James Brokenshire, the shadow home affairs minister, called for the offence of knife possession to carry an automatic jail sentence.

"The Government's only response is short term, ad-hoc police operations, the results of which they spin and manipulate anyway to try and get a good story, 2009 must herald a new approach."



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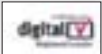
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Revealed: the worrying plight of our mammals

■ BY NICK AMES

A THIRD of mammals in the UK – including many species regularly encountered in Kent – are in “serious decline”, a disturbing report has revealed.

Dormice, water voles and harvest mice are among the creatures under threat, the State of Britain's Mammals survey warns.

And even the hedgehog – once a common visitor to many gardens – is under threat because of fewer hibernation sites.

The industrialisation of the countryside, the rise of invasive predators and modern farming techniques are to blame for falls in the numbers of about 40 species.

The report reveals that the number of water voles – a species immortalised by Ratty in *The Wind In The Willows* – has fallen by 88 per cent in the last 25 years.

They have been devastated by American mink that have escaped from fur farms.

Hazel dormice populations have fallen by 23 per cent, the report, written for the People's Trust For Endangered Species, found.

The list of animals most at risk now includes 18 species – or 30 per cent of all land mammals in the UK.

Chief executive Jill Nelson said that although hedgehogs remained a relatively common sight in gardens across the UK, their



RESTLESS SLEEP: Dormice numbers have declined by almost a quarter in recent years, according to the survey

numbers had fallen by a fifth since the early 1970s. The fashion for neat gardens has robbed them of hibernation hideaways, while they have also been hit by loss of habitat, disease and changing climate.

Mrs Nelson said: “With population numbers of between one million and three million, there

are plenty of hedgehogs around, but fewer than there once were. They seem to be more prevalent in urban areas now because of changes in agricultural practices.

“When we hear people saying they are not seeing them in their gardens as much as they used to, you start to worry.”

Partnership's protection is always there for victims

KENT Police are working with the National Centre for Domestic Violence to provide victims with access to legal representation 24 hours a day, all year round.

The partnership was launched at Kent Police College with Chief Superintendent Lee Catling, centre chief executive officer Steve Connor and local solicitors present.

The National Centre for Domestic Violence gives free legal advice and representation to victims of domestic abuse and helps them obtain court non-molestation orders, also known as injunctions.

An injunction stops a violent or abusive partner or ex-partner from using or threatening violence.

Chief Supt Catling said: “This partnership will help police officers in protecting victims and their families from abusers.

“Police and public protection unit officers will be able to refer victims to the centre for advice, which will help them start to rebuild their lives free from violence and abuse. Officers will be able to help victims seek free legal advice quickly.

“It is a criminal offence to breach non-molestation orders and we will arrest anyone breaching court orders.”

Mr Connor said: “Domestic violence is a cowardly crime. Our partnership with Kent Police will give anyone needing legal advice or an injunction fast access to our service, which is free to all regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation or financial circumstances.

“By standing together, we will send out a message that this horrific crime will not be tolerated and that we will work to bring abusers to justice.”

The centre is able to offer assistance at court using a ‘MacKenzie friend’ – a person who can offer legal advice – to accompany victims throughout proceedings. Leaflets publicising the partnership and the new services available in Kent and Medway are on display around the county.

'Missing' registered sex offenders revealed by FOI request

THIRTEEN registered sex offenders have “gone missing” in Kent, according to figures obtained by the BBC.

The broadcaster requested information about offenders who are not now at their reg-

istered address under the Freedom of Information Act. Data supplied by 38 police forces across the UK showed 317 sex offenders were reported as missing or unaccounted for.

The largest number of missing offenders was

reported by the Met in London, where 112 have disappeared. Other forces with high numbers missing include the West Midlands with 34, Greater Manchester (18), Northumbria (12) and Sussex (10).

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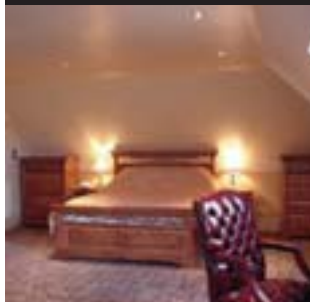
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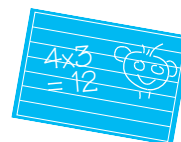
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**BREAK TIME****Brightest and best advice academy**

EXPERTS from troubleshooters Ernst and Young are helping Marlowe Academy business and ICT students with their BTEC exams.

The company, with the help of teachers, has set students the task of turning round an imaginary failing chain of electrical goods stores.

Students are learning to relaunch the stores with a new logo and to target particular stores and warehouses.

Ernst and Young advisers visit periodically to check on progress. Students are also getting advice from an expert provided by Business Link South East, at the neighbouring Innovation Centre.

Regular clinics are held for business professionals and the students also benefit. The students get an inside view and learn about the steps they have to take when starting up a new business.

ICT students have also begun work on setting up and designing websites for three of the new companies operating out of the Innovation Centre.

Manager Leza Riley said six firms were already at the centre, with six more due to move in this month.

Channels of charity

CHATHAM House Grammar pupils are planning to swim twice the distance of the English Channel to help children in Uganda.

The swim will take place at the Upton School pool in Broadstairs. It is part of a campaign to support the building and equipping of a classroom at a secondary school through the World Vision overseas development programme.

So far the boys have raised £2,270 towards their target of £3,500 with raffles, cake sales, a coin collection and music at Broadstairs bandstand.

Head-teacher John Mathews said: "The boys do a splendid job and I am impressed by their commitment."

Enjoying the fruits of June's labours

■ BY TOM BETTS

UNSUNG hero June Langley from Broadstairs has had her work in education celebrated with a trophy in the Kent Awards for Volunteering Excellence.

For more than six years the 79-year-old former BT worker has been a volunteer reader helper at St Peter's Junior School, working with children, hearing them read and talking to them about their interests.

She helped launch the St Peter's healthy schools initiative and every day goes shopping to buy the best-value fruit which she prepares and displays for the fruit break shop.

The children assist June, which helps with their numeracy and communication skills.

Head-teacher Sharon Irvine, who nominated June for the award, said: "What began as a 'little job' has now grown into a 15-hour weekly commitment from June, which as a school we are extremely grateful for, as we would not have the funding to provide this service otherwise."

"Despite problems with her health, June has never missed a day. Come rain, snow or shine, she always turns up. What's more, June has a lovely way with children. She's kind, understanding and caring."

"The children at our school look on her as their grandmother. She brings them gifts at Christmas and talks them through any little problems they have at home and at school."



OUR HERO: Volunteer June Langley shows her excellence award and certificate to pupils at St Peter's Junior School

"She is always cheerful and happy and will always find time to talk to the children. The pupils and staff adore her."

June also regularly helps at the Welcome Club in Ramsgate, where she takes the register and makes teas for the pensioners every Thursday. In the past she has also worked

with the meals-on-wheels and books-on-wheels services.

The awards ceremony was held at the Ramada Jarvis Hotel in Maidstone. Mrs Langley received a trophy, a certificate, two tickets to a show at The Marlowe Theatre in Canterbury and £400 for a project at school.

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Is this really the best time of year to be making life-changing decisions?

Resolution escalates into a cross training experience

I'VE never really been one for making New Year's resolutions.

I always felt there was nothing to be gained from choosing this particular month for making life-changing decisions. Surely it is best to make these kinds of promises to yourself when you really feel like it?

Having said that, I have succumbed to the common mantra of keeping fit this year: I have even bought an exercise machine. I got the Carl Lewis Cross Trainer second-hand... perhaps in the knowledge it was not worth forking out huge amounts of money on something that was likely to end up in the back of a cupboard or 'accidentally' left in a lay-by.

I bought the instrument of torture from a nice man in Sittingbourne. Well, he was certainly smiling when he saw me coming. It was probably just a sense of relief that he did not have to look at the damn thing for another year, nagging away at his conscience. He proudly said he had only ever used it twice.

At least now he has 50 quid in his pocket and

could get some exercise walking to the pub.

I have used the machine more than twice. Three times, in fact – and that's three times more than I imagine Carl Lewis ever did. The first time, I stumbled off the pedals as it sent my arms and legs flailing in different directions, ripping my hamstring in the process.

The second time I stopped after three minutes because my heart rate was going so fast the pulse detector couldn't keep up. It can deal with anything up to 160 beats per minute, but once you go past 300 it just becomes a blur.

I am beginning to believe only three Carl Lewis Cross Trainers were ever made. One for the picture in the catalogues, one demonstrated on TV shopping channels, and the third bought by a man in Chelmsford back in 1996 and that has since made its way, through numerous owners, to end up in my spare room getting in the way of the filing cabinet.

My other resolution is not to go to the video shop unless I know what I want to watch. On one recent trip I spent almost an hour in the shop deliberating over some worthy art film,

only to discover it was being shown on BBC2 that night. And it was rubbish.

Talking of films, I must stop watching Star Wars. In the last 12 months my habit has reached junkie levels. I blame the invention of the DVD box set.

Sunday afternoons are the worst. I get this terrible craving and I have to get my fix – even if just for five minutes. Then I watch it again when the films are shown on ITV because the picture is slightly bigger and my failing eyesight can see more of the feeble CGI of the dreadful prequels.

Before Christmas I asked my partner to get me the Clone Wars cartoon, the one in a style that gives all the characters the physique of Masi warriors – even Jabba the Hut.

So this year it's less couch-surfing in a galaxy far far away and more working out on a do-it-yourself escalator that goes nowhere.

• **EDITOR'S NOTE:** All blogs are supplied with full name and address of the authors. They do not reflect the view of the newspaper but are designed to give our readers the chance to air their views.

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And don't forget, for all the latest news and video from your town, log on to www.yourthanet.co.uk.

Write to The Editor, Yourthanet, KoS Media, Apple Barn, Hythe Road, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SR.

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Sat 17	Holiday On Ice Brighton "Mystery"	£39
Sun 18	Holiday On Ice Brighton "Mystery"	£39
Sun 18	Bruges or Sluis	£30
Wed 21	Holiday On Ice Brighton "Mystery"	£39
Thu 22	The Musical Museum With Lunch New	£29
Sat 24	Holiday On Ice Brighton "Mystery"	£39
Sun 25	Holiday On Ice Brighton "Mystery"	£39
Sun 25	London Eye, Lunch & River Cruise	£59
Mon 26	Monday Special – Ypres & St Flora	£20
Tue 27	Pussycat Dolls At The O2 Arena	£59
Wed 28	Mystery Day With Lunch	£20
Sat 31	Holiday On Ice Brighton "Mystery"	£39

FEBRUARY

Date	Destination	Price (Adult pp)^
Sun 1	Holiday On Ice Brighton "Mystery"	£39
Thu 5	Greenwich Maritime Museum New	£15
Sat 7	London Showtime	fr £54
Mon 9	Monday Special – Ostend & St Flora	£20
Wed 11	Lunch At Moulin Snick, St Omer	£40
Thu 12	Raf Museum London New	£15
Sat 14	Valentines Love Is In The Air – London Eye & Chocolates	£39
Sun 15	London Eye, Lunch & River Cruise	£59
Tue 17	London Zoo	£29
Wed 18	Kew Gardens Tropical Plants 250th Anniversary	£30
Thu 19	Boulogne & Hypermarket	£25
Sat 21	Disneyland® Resort Paris	£65
Tue 24	Imperial War Museum & Ian Fleming Exhibition (James Bond)	£25
Wed 25	Sound Of Music	£49
Thu 26	Mystery Day	£15
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^ Call for child & senior prices

MARCH

Date	Destination	Price (Adult pp)^
Mon 2	Monday Special – Ghent	£20
Wed 4	National Gallery & Picasso Exhibition New	£29
Fri 6	Dirty Dancing	£59
Sat 7	The Secret World Of Bletchley Park New	£29
Sun 8	Crufts Dog Show	£40
Tue 10	Paris In Springtime	£40
Wed 11	Lunch At Moulin Snick, St Omer	£40
Thu 12	Milestones Living History Museum New	£25
Sun 15	Bruges or Sluis	£30
Tue 17	Windsor Lunch Cruise New	£35
Thu 19	Wisley Gardens At Springtime	£25
Sat 21	London Showtime	fr £54
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Sun 22	London Eye, Lunch & River Cruise Mothers Day	£59
Sun 22	Classical Spectacular with lunch	£83
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yourcompetition

Sail to the sales to snap up les bargains

The French government has announced today as the first day of the winter sales in the areas closest to the UK – le Nord, Pas de Calais and Aube.

French shopkeepers are strictly regulated when it comes to what they can call a sale. Just two are permitted a year, one winter and one summer, and reductions must be on normal stock. Buying stock in bulk and slapping a sale sign on it is a big non, non in France.

Discounts are generally between 50 and 70 per cent and 'Solde' is the key sign to look out for as it confirms items are in one of the formal sale periods. 'Degriffe' or 'Remise' followed by an amount shows the mark-down or discount.

Whilst 'Promo' or 'Promotion' signs are widespread they refer to just that: the sort of special offer promo a retailer can run at any time.

We've teamed up with P&O Ferries to give three lucky families a chance to bag some bargains by winning daytrip tickets for a car and passengers on the Dover-Calais route.

Taking your car to France couldn't be easier. Driving on board takes just minutes and the bargains begin right away as P&O Ferries offers savings across drinks, perfumes, cosmetics, jewellery, confectionery and gifts.

The crossing takes 90 minutes and on arrival, the 4 Boulevards shopping complex in the heart of Calais includes a hypermarket, large H&M and gallery of 50 shops. Nearby are the shopping malls and hypermarkets of Citie Europe and Marques Avenue.



P&O Ferries has up to 25 return sailings every day on its Dover-Calais service, so there's always a sailing to suit.

For further information or to book visit www.POferry.com or call 08716 646464.

To enter, simply answer the question below and send your entry on a postcard along with your e-mail address (if applicable), name, address, and daytime telephone number to P&O Ferries Competition, KOS Media, Apple Barn, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent, TN25 6SR.

The closing date is January 14, 2009.

Question: What do the French call the sales? A) Les Ferdinand B) Les Dennis C) Les Soldes

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Prizes cannot be extended and are only valid on the Dover-Calais route operated by P&O Ferries. Prizes cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Height/length/width/weight restrictions apply and prize crossings

are subject to space availability. Prize valid until December 31, 2009. No cash or other alternatives for any of the stated prizes will be offered. The judge's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Neither P&O Ferries' employees and their relatives nor employees/relatives of KOS Media are eligible to enter the competition.

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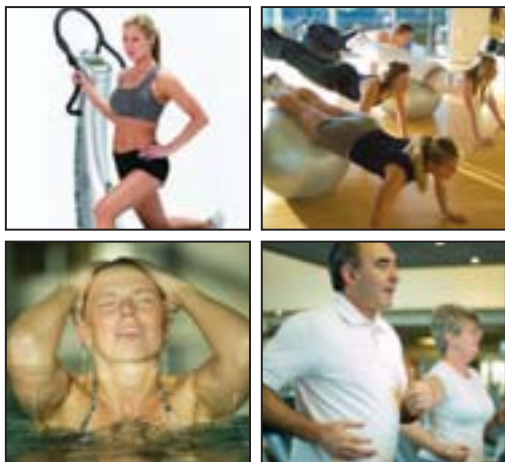


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yourletters



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TALK TIME

GEMMA DIXON

Gemma Dixon, 25, is a community involvement worker at Newlands Children's Centre



What is the purpose of the children's centre?

The primary goal is to offer families with children under the age of five one location where they can access a range of services and information, all of which are delivered by a multi-disciplinary team of professionals in Ramsgate. We are able to point to different support and advice, including benefits advice, Citizens Advice Bureau, Thanet College and adult education courses and the children's information service. Newlands also has a nursery on site run by Thanet Early Years Project.

How do you think it benefits the community?

Parents and families may not know where to go or how to access a certain agency. At Newlands they can speak to trained staff who can offer advice and information and assess their needs. They can then be referred to agencies or professional bodies, including health visitors, speech and language therapists, midwives, breast-feeding support and child development.

What is your role?

I offer a listening ear and a friendly face to the community. I offer support on behalf of Newlands to families and help them access services that improve their well-being. This is offered via home visits, advice and referrals. I also help run groups within the centre including parent and toddler groups called Bizzy Babies and Kiddy Winks. We also run a coffee morning and have a toy library. All our groups have a professionally-run crèche within the centre offering messy play and creative sessions.

Do you like what you do?

Yes. I enjoy meeting people and am lucky to work in a role where each day is different. I get immense satisfaction knowing I have helped a family, no matter how small their request may be. I find my role challenging and I always have goals to aspire to.

YOUR LETTERS

Election will revive hope in our people

The end of 2008 was not pleasant at all.

The UK is in recession and people are losing their jobs, their homes and any hope for prosperity in 2009.

We've had the Bernard Madoff financial shenanigans, Baby P's appalling death and an Iraqi doctor who was so disillusioned about Britain's involvement in the war in Iraq that he constructed his own bombs to use against us.

Because every day we are fed disaster news and disaster politics by the media, it is easy to start believing that nothing can be done to change things.

We know that some of the greatest problems in the world can only be alleviated if countries and people work together.

We also know that the possibility of citizens working together has been hampered.

One of the key philosophies of the Liberal Democrats is based on the fact that we believe in people and have optimism in them.

We want to disperse power and not allow it to rest in too few hands, be that government, business or finance.

The next general election – whether it is held this spring or in 2010 – will bring the opportunity to do things differently.

Liberal Democrats can provide the inspiration to create a fairer society, a greener economy and a politics of trust.

Because at a time of fear and disillusionment, I believe people want – and need – hope.

Bill Furness
chairman, Birchington Liberal Democrats



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Not only can you use email and letters to respond to our stories, you can comment via our website too.

Beneath most stories on the www.yourthanet.co.uk website there is the facility to leave your comments on whatever YOU thought of the online article. To leave your remarks, simply click on the 'Add your comments' link and tell us what you think.

And remember, www.yourthanet.co.uk is updated daily, bringing you the latest, breaking news from across Thanet as well as the surrounding villages.

We will include the best on these pages, too – ensuring your comments reach the widest possible audience. In addition, if you find your newsagent, supermarket or petrol station runs out of Yourthanet before you've picked up your copy, you never need to miss out.

On www.yourthanet.co.uk you can access, for free, the full newspaper in our highly-acclaimed e-editions.

Tongue-lashing is just so negative

I refer to the letter (December 17) from self-styled martyr Christine Tongue, from

Broadstairs. It appears that Ms Tongue is starting to miss her 10 minutes of fame and has to resort to making comments about Yourthanet interviewees [Thanet council deputy leader Roger Latchford] to remind us how important she is.

Ms Tongue, who until recently seemed to focus most of her energy on opposing recession-busting business projects, appears to have branched out and now criticises the popular wheelie-bin scheme.

With all the time spent campaigning against the efforts of those trying to help the local economy, I would be surprised if she has time to use a wheelie-bin.

Pat Bennett
Ramsgate

Difficult to swallow the modern world

The annual cost of removing pesticide residues from drinking water is about £120 million.

How many millions does the removal of heavy metals, contraceptives, other hormones and prescription drugs cost?

Water purification is carried out, but accidents and human error can happen.

More than 137,000 people lost their jobs in the last three months, with little prospect of gainful employment in the worst recession since the 1930s.

Bankers and those with Government protection have no need to worry, apparently.

Job Centre staff in one city poked fun at job-seekers in emails.

The slums of the future are taking over suburbs and cities. We are short on hospitals or dentists.

Doctors now can earn almost £300,000 per year; nurse practitioners £100,000, but patient services are unaffordable.

Councils boast about getting supermarkets and developers to provide infrastructure as part of their planning brief. The free-market economy has turned England into Little America – with all the down-sides.

Rita Grootendorst
by email

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Sport's golden year

In many ways 2008 has been a year to forget, with the continuing economic woes and the problems in the Middle East and across Asia.

However, there is one area which gave people here a real boost – sport.

Not the prima donnas of the Premiership or the under-achieving cricketers and rugby players, but the members of the Olympic team who did so well in Beijing.

People such as Rebecca Adlington went out as unknowns, but by the end of the Games they were being acclaimed as heroes.

These performers showed what sport is all about and brought a great deal of pride to the UK.

Warren Bright
Ashford

More trouble in store

What a shame to see so many Woolworths now closed for ever, including our stores in Ramsgate and Margate.

This national institution will not be the last to go and I forecast things will be a lot worse before they get better in 2009.

Let's hope the Government adopts policies which tackle the long-term implications of the credit crunch and doesn't just opt for a quick-fix approach which will see further problems pile up in the future.

Philip Turner
Margate

A limited shelf life

I went to the final sale in my local

Woolworths and was stunned to see the store selling off its shelves.

What good could they possibly be to anyone, unless they in turn were setting up a store?

I've heard of 'everything must go', but that was totally ridiculous.

Brian Hills
Faversham

On the wrong track

I will be interested to see what impact the new high-speed trains have when they come into service across Kent later this year.

It seems to me that only a few stations will benefit. Ashford will by far get the greatest reduction in travel time and I can see that trains running from the coast will improve travel times, even though they will not run at full speed for the entire journey.

But what about the smaller stations and villages?

I am sure there will be fewer services stopping at such places as Marden, Pluckley, Lenham and Charing on the London-bound lines.

So will villagers have to take a train to a major station and then board a fast one? This will add to journey times, not cut them.

Terence Roberts
Lenham

Our feathered friends

You recently carried a feature about the RSPB and its call to put out winter nesting boxes.

I did so in my garden and was delighted that a large variety of birds took advantage of the box over the holiday period. The sight of

a robin at Christmas time was a particular delight.

Diane McIntyre
by email

Who's the real star?

I enjoyed the Christmas Dr Who show, but it certainly showed David Morrissey should not be considered for the title role.

In the part he played, a sort of Dr Who wannabe, he was very good, but when he was on screen next to David Tennant it was clear who the star was.

He did not have a fraction of the true Doctor's charisma and did not show nearly enough to warrant the permanent role.

Tony Simpkins
by email

The road to ridicule

The suggestion that roads could be named after local people who have achieved something is a good one.

But it should not be politically motivated. The 1980s saw councils naming streets after obscure Latin American 'freedom-fighters' or subsequently disgraced African politicians. It became a standing joke.

Paul Crowther
Maidstone

It's never too early

Can I be the first to tell your readers that there are only 352 days until Christmas?

Lucy Pearce
by email

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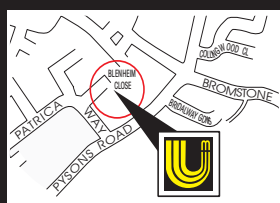
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LEGENDS OF ROCK: Status Quo will play Bedgebury Pinetum & Forest's first concert of the summer – tickets are likely to sell extremely quickly

Your Quota of solace

Summer concerts to banish winter blues

AFTER all the festive excitement, cast your mind ahead to the entertainment treats that 2009 will bring.

It is never too early to think about the summer, so banish those winter blues with thoughts of warm sun on your back and great music in your ears.

Bedgebury National Pinetum & Forest has announced the line-up for its big summer concerts, and music fans can look forward to another fantastic weekend.

On the Saturday, legendary rockers Status Quo will be filling the forest air with their unmistakable sound.

Tickets for Quo's outdoor gigs always sell out quickly, so book soon to avoid missing out on this musical treat. The band last played at Bedgebury three years ago and, having sold out three forest concerts last year, are looking forward to returning to the Kent setting.

Having been in the business for five decades, Status Quo are a rock'n'roll institution. They have sold more than 118 million records worldwide and scored more than 63 hit UK singles, more than any other band.

Their records have spent more than seven and a half years in the charts and they made 106 appearances on Top of the Pops.

In a real change of tone, the Sunday will see Katherine Jenkins dazzling the audience with her spectacular voice. A true symbol of girl power, the classical superstar's fifth album outsold the likes of Girls Aloud and the Spice Girls. At just 28,

SUMMER CONCERTS

Saturday and Sunday, June 6-7,
Bedgebury National Pinetum & Forest,
Goudhurst

she is already the fastest-selling soprano ever, with global record sales of more than three million.

She will be accompanied by the National Symphony Orchestra as she demonstrates the versatile voice that has allowed her to sing everything from the great arias of opera to the Hollywood classics.

Tickets cost £32 for Status Quo and £32.50 for Katherine Jenkins, subject to a booking fee. To book, phone the ticket hotline on 01842 814612, buy online at www.forestry.gov.uk/music, or go to the Bedgebury visitor centre.

The Bedgebury concerts are just two of the exciting events happening in Kent later this year. Canterbury's Lounge on the Farm is back during July 10-12 and music lovers can look forward to another great weekend of music. For updates, you can visit www.loungeonthefarm.co.uk.

After a mixed reaction to the Zoo8 event last summer, Port Lympne Wild Animal Park, near Hythe, pledged to return with an improved festival for 2009. Line-up and ticket details are still to be announced.

Sellindge Music Festival became a fully-fledged music event for the first time last year, attracting Idlewild as its headline act.

Tickets go on sale this month for the three-day event, which returns to Hope Farm, near Ashford, from June 5-7. You can find out more at www.sellindgemusicfestival.co.uk.



BIG VOICE: Soprano Katherine Jenkins



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MUSIC

New season
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MORE spectacular entertainment awaits as the Theatre Royal Margate welcomes the New Year.

Explore the folly of love in words and music in musical show *Send In The Gondoliers*, which will be staged on January 24. More great music – with a twist – can be enjoyed in *The Barber*

of Savile Row (pictured), *Unexpected Opera's* rock 'n' roll take on Rossini's classic, *The Barber of Seville*.

Round off January with a celebration of Max Miller – the Cheeky Chappy, while February starts in intriguing fashion with *The False Servant*, in which a woman disguises herself as a man to discover her fiancé's true intentions.

Children can enjoy the fantastical tale *Bink* and the *Hairy Fairy* and there will be

fun for all the family in the *Thanet Police Pantomime Club, A Lad In Hot Water*.

A girl finds herself unexpectedly blessed with a powerful gift in *The Miracle*, but will she have the courage to use it?

With *Forces' Sweethearts* and *A Chorus Line* to enjoy in March, this will be an all-singing, all-dancing season.

For details visit www.theatroyalmargate.com or call the box office on 0845 130 1786 or 01227 787787.

THANET LEISURE

Theatre club's superb array of spring shows

THE Sarah Thorne Theatre Club has an attractive line-up of shows this spring.

Enjoy family fun in *Jack and the Beanstalk*, take a musical journey through life in *Been There Street*, hear the story of *The Frog Princess* and Other Tales and experience the joys of parenthood in comedy *Baby Makes Three*.

These are just some of the highlights at the Memorial Theatre, Broadstairs. For details, visit www.sarahthorne-theatreclub.co.uk.

Make trails and give Slug Pixies a listen

GET ready to rock out when the Slug Pixies perform in Ramsgate this week.

Formed in 2002, the band's sound has been described as "rock music for the hard of hearing".

Find out more about them by visiting the website www.slugpixies.com.

The band will be playing at the Red Lion in King Street on Friday. For more information about the venue, call the pub on 01843 586713.

Chalkie ready to evoke the golden era of music

YOUNG performer Chalkie takes audiences back to a golden musical era during his gigs.

The 21-year-old soloist performs hits from the 1950s and '60s, playing guitar and keyboards, and encourages his audience to join in the fun.

Chalkie will be playing at the Belle Vue in Pegwell Road, Pegwell, on Saturday.

The gig starts at 8.30pm. For more details about the venue, call the pub on 01843 593991.

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The Jimmy Brown Song performed
by Kent Police Male Voice Choir



Medway band UpCDownC are the
latest to perform on The Ether



Top five Kent gigs

1. Intraverse - 13/2/09 at Style & Winch in Maidstone
2. Shychlo And The Boys - 27/2/09 at The Westcoast Bar in Margate
3. A Thousand Ways To Fall - 12/3/09 at The Beercart Arms in Canterbury
4. Blackburner - 13/3/09 at Snowdon Colliery Welfare Club in Aylesham
5. Kayley Weller - 28/3/09 at The Alma in Deal

Anarchy night Taps into some rocking new acts

BY SIMON ROBINSON

A HOST of up-and-coming bands has been lined up to play at the Tap'n'Tin this month – giving music fans the chance to catch a glimpse of the industry's next best things.

Seven groups will take to the stage in the coming weeks, performing at the Chatham venue's Anarchy All Ages club night, open to anyone over the age of 16.

First up on Sunday (January 11) is The Chase, with support coming from Fate Of A Stranger and The Startover.

Lower Than Atlantis headline the next Anarchy night on Sunday, January 25, with Pay No Respect, Breaking The Day and Trial Of Fifty also on the bill. Tickets cost £6, or £5 with an Anarchy wristband.

For more details, visit www.tapntin.co.uk.

Here's a selection of short band biogs to whet your appetite:

The Chase

The unsigned London five-piece cite Foo Fighters, Oasis and The Killers among their influences, but their sound is more akin to the American emo-rock favoured by the likes of Fallout Boy and Panic At The Disco.

Later this month the band will set off on a seven-date UK tour with Farewell City and Scarlet Desire in tow. Having built up a 21,000-strong army of online fans, this could be the year The Chase break through.

See www.myspace.com/thechaseuk.

Fate of a Stranger

Fellow Luton-based emo-rockers Fate Of A Stranger offer a "self-styled brand of post-



TUNE IN: The Chase and Lower Than Atlantis, right, are just two of the great bands set to play at Chatham's Tap'n'Tin

hardcore rock", with driving guitar riffs and catchy vocals drawing a legion of admiring fans.

See www.myspace.com/fateofastrangeruk.

The Startover

The lively quartet describe their sound as a fusion of rock, punk and alternative genres. Simple, well-written songs will see their popularity blossom in the coming months.



If you miss the Tap gig, you can catch The Startover live on three occasions in Maidstone next month.

See www.myspace.com/thisisthestartover.

Lower Than Atlantis

Watford-born four-piece rockers Lower Than Atlantis, who are signed to the Thirty Days Of Night label, come to Medway on Sunday, January 25, and are sure to test the venue's sound system.

All the rock essentials are there – fast guitars, loud vocals and bundles of energy.

Pay No Respect

Heavier than the night's headliners, Pay No Respect offer the darker side to the rock scene – dishing out three-minute songs of screamed vocals and menacing drum beats.

See www.myspace.com/paynorespect.

EXCLUSIVE KOS MEDIA READER OFFER

Mediterranean Jewels Rail-Cruise

HIGHLIGHTS: Escorted from London • Return Eurostar & TGV to Marseilles • 10-night cruise aboard the Orient Queen visiting: Genoa & Naples in Italy; Messina in Sicily; Piraeus, Mykonos, Santorini, Patmos & Katakolon in Greece; Kusadasi in Turkey

June 9 to 20 & Sept 7 to 18, 2009

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The holiday starts with an escorted **afternoon** departure on Eurostar from St Pancras International, London. We travel to Lille or Paris where, we break our journey with an overnight stay at a hotel. Early the next morning we join the TGV to Marseilles, arriving early-to-mid afternoon. From here we have a short transfer to the Orient Queen to start our 10-night cruise.

During the cruise, relax and watch the world go by, enjoy great food and entertainment, and venture ashore at the numerous ports of call. You can also choose from a comprehensive selection of optional shore excursions taking-in: **Portofino, Pompeii, Athens, Ancient Ephesus, Mount Etna** and more.

At the end of the cruise we disembark after breakfast in Marseilles and take the TGV to Lille or Paris where we join the Eurostar to St Pancras, London, arriving early-to-mid evening.

INCLUDED: Escorted from London • Return Eurostar & TGV to Marseilles • 1 night in Lille or Paris • 10-night cruise aboard the Orient Queen - based on 2 people sharing a standard inside cabin (outside cabin from £1,159pp; sole occupancy cabin from £1,199pp) • All meals on board (breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea & dinner each day) • Entertainment on board



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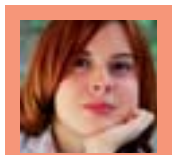
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Live assistance, 2pm-5.30pm, Mon to Fri | Email: louise@g8wave.co.uk
(Calls cost 10p/min; contact your service provider for details)



WOMEN seeking men

SINGLE DAD WANTED

Single mum, 23, nice and curvy, 5ft6, blonde, blues, likes shopping, cinema, animals, WLTW honest, trustworthy male, 28-38. Box 446099

I LOVE FOOTBALL

Fun to be with blonde female, 25, 5ft2, loves football, going out and staying in, looking for a like-minded man to be soulmate. Box 446494

MAYBE MORE

Seeking fun, friendship, maybe more. WLTW fun man 25-30. I'm female, 26, brown hair/blue eyes, average build. Box 445622

SMILES

Hi I'm 27, redhead, 5ft1, blue eyes, intelligent, open-minded, caring, loves going out, music, good meals, seeking friendship, snuggles with caring, understanding gent. Box 446786

SMUGGLE UP

Tall, attractive, good hearted African female, 28yr old, enjoys films, good food and cuddles. WLTW a white male for friendship/romance. Box 441664

ON THE LOOKOUT FOR LOVE

37yr old female, 2 kids, slim, brown hair and eyes, 5ft2, looking for a caring, loving, honest and trusting male to be my someone special. Box 446652

MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

Good looking woman, 37, 5ft2, brown hair/eyes, 2 kids. Looking for new friends, and hopefully someone special. Box 446039

SEIZE THE DAY

Loving female, 36, 5ft4, brown hair, green eyes, likes socialising, staying in, seeks genuine male for friendship and more. Box 428666

LOVE TO LOVE YOU

Lovely female, 36, 5ft4, medium-large build, blonde hair, blue eyes, own house, loves walking, going out, the usual! Seeking male for long-term/serious relationship. Box 438102

DON'T PASS ME BY

Cute, single mum of 4, 38yrs old, Kent based, into most things, looking for friendship or possibly romance. Box 897983

MEND A BROKEN HEART

Single mum, 37, fun-loving, been hurt in past, looking for nice, genuine guy for hopeful happiness - no time wasters! Box 938053

FROM ME TO YOU

Tall leggy brunette, 38, recently bereaved, enjoys meals out or nights in, dry white wine, a good movie & cuddles, seeking a male for companionship. Box 887404

YOU'LL SMILE IF YOU DIAL

Bubbly 40yr old profile, enjoys beaches, pubs, clubs, WLTW a like-minded, caring male to share fun times with. Box 435102

FUN AND ROMANCE

Attractive woman, 41, 5ft6, blonde hair/blue eyes, I'd like to meet a guy for romance and fun. I enjoy cinema, pubs, meals out. Box 447009

PASSION FOR YOU

Medium build woman, 41, 5ft2, kind, caring, loving and tactile, GSOH, looking to meet a nice man for a LTR. Box 446880

COUNTRY LASS

Country-loving happy lady, 42, green eyes, long curly hair, good figure, looking for a genuine guy for a serious relationship and happy moments. Box 883723

COULD IT BE YOU?

Hi I'm 44, slim, 5ft8, a redhead, love nights out, socialising, looking for friendship initially and hopefully more for a LTR. Box 889800

HERE WE ARE

Easilygoing female, 45, self-employed hairdresser, likes theatre, restaurants, socialising, sofa cuddles, seeking loyal, loving, caring male for good times and more. Box 444672

SOULMATE SOUGHT

African descent female, 45, 5ft6, tall figure, radiant, happy, attractive, loves music, theatre, travel, the arts. WLTW gentleman who is cultured, kind, solvent and fun. Box 439398

MAKE ME LAUGH!

Fun extrovert person, 45, likes cinema, going out, meals, socialising, 5ft7, dark brown hair/eyes, curvy, seeking nice guy to start off as friends with. Box 444697

CAN YOU HANDLE ME?

Long dark hair, brown eyes, pettish with a wacky SOH. Looking for friends to chill with, then who knows? Box 884441

BORN TO MAKE YOU HAPPY

Caring lovely lady, 42, genuine, short brown hair, lacks confidence seeking loyal, genuine person, enjoys a special to put the spark back into my life. Box 885761

LET'S CLICK

WLTW a nice guy with a similar nature: I'm an outgoing woman, 42, with brown hair and green eyes. Tell me about you! Box 446847

FAST LOVE

Single lady, 43, likes gardening, eating out, cinema, music and more, seeking male for friendship and maybe more. Box 446897

LET'S SEE WHAT HAPPENS

Laid-back single mum, very bubbly, outgoing and intelligent, 43, enjoys social life, drinks, meals, cinema; looking to start afresh with someone new, easygoing and life-loving. Box 446102

YOU NEVER KNOW

Kind, loving and caring mum, 43, 5ft5, round but cuddly! Just looking for someone to share my life with... how about you? S. Leonard-on-Sea. Box 446457

GENUINE REPLIES ONLY

Bubbly female, 44, brunette, N/S, medium/large build, enjoys singing and theatre. Would love to meet a decent fun-loving guy, similar age, pref non-smoker for LTR. Box 445955

LOVING, CARING & HONEST

Hard working single mum, young 44yr old, 5ft5, medium build, enjoys dining out, holidays, cinema and walks. WLTW a caring and genuine male for friendship/relationship. Box 444751

JUST IMAGINE

Petite, brunette, bubbly, friendly, easy-going single mum, 49, enjoys cinema, eating out, socialising, most things. WLTW genuine male, to see where life takes us! Box 835652

HELP!

Positively vivacious female, 59, 5ft4, enjoys art, seaside walks and music, seeks tallish, kind, caring male to grow old with...disgracefully. Box 444938

I HAVE A DREAM

Blonde, bubbly curvy female, 59, looks younger, fun to be with, honest, seeks caring male to be my soul-mate. GSOH! Box 835891

WALKS ALONG THE COAST

Honest & sincere female, 58, tall, GSOH, loves country pubs, coasts, cinema, seeking a man who's a match for me with GSOH for friendship. Box 441622

MISS JULIE

Bubbly blonde, 44, stupid and like having a laugh good company, friendship, would like to meet new friends for hopeful love. Box 888162

DEAL OR NO DEAL? (IN DEAL)

Deal-based lady, 43, divorced, brunette, green eyes, 5ft10, likes going out, pubs, clubs, cinema, shopping, walks, loves films and all sports except cricket. Box 430384

WARM AND THAT JAZZ

Warm, radiant, witty, intelligent, attractive, black female, Christian, 44, likes music, jazz, travel, art, restaurants, theatre, seeking a cultured, N/S, intelligent, solvent gentleman. Box 430375

COULD IT BE YOU?

Hi I'm 44, slim, 5ft8, a redhead, love nights out, socialising, looking for friendship initially and hopefully more for a LTR. Box 889800

HERE WE ARE

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MAKE ME LAUGH!

Fun extrovert person, 45, likes cinema, going out, meals, socialising, 5ft7, dark brown hair/eyes, curvy, seeking nice guy to start off as friends with. Box 444697

EVERLASTING LOVE

Beautiful black female, 46, WLTW a caring, gentle and loving gentleman, 45-60, 5ft10+, pref a bit sporty, for a everlasting relationship. Turbidge Wells. Box 445407

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WHERE R U?

Cheerful, honest, popular blonde, 50yrs old, 5ft2, slim, looking to find an honest, loyal man. Ian, call again, leave contact details. Box 887347

FUNNY GIRL

Petite, blonde female, 50, GSOH, likes music, books, films, cooking, looking for romantic soulmate, 40-55, for LTR. Kent. Box 835181

CARING & PROFESSIONAL

Female, 49, 5ft4, long hair, slim, likes eating out, the beach, travel, seeks a friendly chap, 48-55. Box 417100

A NEW MAN FOR THE NEW YEAR

Sue from Kent, 52, looking for an honest and sincere gentleman to share a loving and committed relationship with. Box 447493

MEND A BROKEN HEART

Hard-working, kind and caring female, young 52, seeking a genuine man for a relationship, no time wasters please! Box 444286

SEEING THROUGH THE SHAYNES

Attractive female, 53, intelligent, kind, funny, non-smoking, WLTW nice, kind, normal male, 50-60, for theatre, laughs and more. Box 446383

SEEKING SOULMATE

Gorgeous slim attractive young-looking female, 54, active, wicked SOH, 5ft5, blue eyes, sociable, loves music, dancing, travelling; seeking warm, sincere man for genuine companionship. Box 446634

ENJOY LIFE

59yr old woman, brown hair/eyes, 5ft2, I'm divorced with a grown up family, I enjoy reading, travel, cinema, music, eating out, WLTW caring, genuine man. Box 446798

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Register your number with us & send by SMS to 07746 738 788. Enter P2P as subject.

MMS - standard network charges apply.

SOPHISTICATED SUE

Sue, 56yr old, 5ft4, green eyes, petite, loves cooking, holidays, reading and swimming. WLTW a tall professional male, similar age, for friendship - romance. Box 444309

NO SHALLOWNESS

Intelligent lady, 55, 5ft8, large build, looking for a nice, genuine male who enjoys theatre, meals, laughter, music, relaxing and good conversation. Box 444145

EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT!

African lady, 58, likes reading, current affairs and travelling, WLTW an outgoing, fun-loving and honest male to share the rest of my life with. Box 454122

LIFE IS FOR LIVING

Stylish and sophisticated woman, 56, young outlook on life, curvy but slim, confident and outgoing, loves holidays abroad, seeks a gentleman, 50-59, for romance. Box 447475

FANCY A RIDE?

Affectionate tactile bubbly woman, young 56, 5'7", blonde, curvy, looking for lasting relationship with 50-58 year old loving man. Box 888680

HAND IN HAND, HEART TO HEART

Open-minded lady, 58, seeking male 56-63, is enjoying, eating out, gardening, foreign holidays and more. Box 446468

HELP!

Positively vivacious female, 59, 5ft4, enjoys art, seaside walks and music, seeks tallish, kind, caring male to grow old with...disgracefully. Box 444938

I HAVE A DREAM

Blonde, bubbly curvy female, 59, looks younger, fun to be with, honest, seeks caring male to be my soul-mate. GSOH! Box 835891

WALKS ALONG THE COAST

Honest & sincere female, 58, tall, GSOH, loves country pubs, coasts, cinema, seeking a man who's a match for me with GSOH for friendship. Box 441622

ONLY LOVE

Classy/intelligent, happy, slim, attractive, fit and active lady, 60, GSOH, enjoys travel, gardening etc. Looking for that special friend to share life with. Box 883791

TIME ON MY HANDS

Recently retired female, 60, 5ft1, medium build, very nice person, WLTW a male, similar age, to spend my days with, must be caring! Eastbourne. Box 445696

Men seeking women

That's me Kind, loving, fun woman, passionate and considerate with a GSOH. I'm 24, 5ft5, and looking for an attractive female to share interests. Box 445340

FRIENDSHIP, MAYBE MORE

Curvy fit female, 32, seeks like-minded woman, for friendship, hopefully more. Single mum, work part time. Box 886142

LOVE TO LOVE

Easilygoing female, 40, blue eyes, blonde hair, medium build, likes wine-ing, dining, socialising, holidays, walks cinema; seeking likewise female for companionship and more. Box 446953

WANTS TO COOK FOR TWO

Single male, 43, no ties, very genuine, slim, 6ft4, brown hair, green eyes, loves sport and soul music. WLTW a female to date. Box 445780

I'LL MAKE YOU LAUGH

Very romantic, caring and loyal male, 44, slim, blue eyes, fair hair, great SOH, seeks female with similar interests for hopeful LTR. No time-wasters! Hastings. Box 446120

DAD'S THE WORD

Lonely single male, 44, 6ft2, fair hair, great SOH, quite happy but looking for a lady 30-40 to have fun with and hopefully something else. Box 446452

NIGHTS IN AND OUT

Separated male in Maidstone area, 44, single dad, 5ft10, blue/grey eyes and dark hair, 40-50, to wine and dine and enjoy time with. Lets see what happens! Box 884411

TO THE FUTURE!

Well-built male, 44, looking for a female for friendship and love, lets start 2008! Not being single with a smile! Box 883622

SHARE THE GOOD LIFE

Professional male, 45, own home/car, likes cinema, weekends away, the coast, a BBQ and good wine, looking for friendship, hopefully more. Box 428929

HAND IN HAND ALONG THE BEACH

Genuine, honest caring bloke, 45, medium build, 5ft10, lots of love to give, very sunny, romantic, fun, cinema, seeking special lady to fall in love with. Box 441826

YOU FOR ME & ME FOR YOU...

Thoughtful, caring, divorced female, 47, sociable, outgoing, black hair, enjoys concerts, walks on the beach and eating out, WLTW lady with similar characteristics for LTR. Eastbourne. Box 447119

LOTS OF LOVE TO GIVE

Family-man tired of living in a void, 47, 5ft11, very caring, looking to meet a woman with a heart of gold to be happy with. Box 447341

WELL-DRESSED CHAP

Attractive black male, 6ft, 4ft, fit, healthy, I like swimming, social drink. WLTW white lady, Kent based, someone fun to be with. Box 447073

LOVE ON THE DANCEFLOOR

Outgoing young-minded male, 47, a smoker, likes war games, books, cinema

Wine & Dine

and have

a Great Time

at

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PUBS

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Just FUN FUN FUN

Cramptons

139 High Street, Broadstairs T: 01843 860428

Coming soon – Every Thursday Pool night
– Cash prize to be won
Coming soon – Every Monday
– FIFA 09 (X-Box) Knock out – Prize to be won

Guart in a Pint Pot

28-30 Charlotte Square, Margate T: 01843 223672

Sheldons Freehouse

High Street, Margate T: 01843 223578

Excellent home-cooked traditional lunches
served Monday-Saturday 12pm-2.30pm with five
daily specials.

The 19th Hole

George Hill Rd, Kingsgate, Broadstairs
T: 01843 869548

Traditional home-made food served Tuesday to
Sunday 12pm-2pm and Wednesday, Thursday,
Friday and Saturday evenings.

Three course Sunday lunch plus glass of wine
£11.95 per person.

Elephant & Castle

8-10 Hereson Road, Ramsgate T: 01843 593046

The Lanthorne

20 Callis Court Rd, Broadstairs T: 01843 861952

Bradstow Mill

125 High Street, Broadstairs T: 01843 861108

LIVE MUSIC

10th Jan Mutley
17th Jan Surf Dude Grandad
24th Jan Breed
31st Jan Delay Room

Karaoke every Friday night

HALF PRICE Function room hire from the 1st Jan
– 1st March

LIVE MUSIC Queens Head

78 Harbour Parade, Ramsgate T: 01843 853888

Fantastic Function Room for Hire

Lively seafront fun pub with 3 bars and local DJs
on Friday and Saturday Nights open till late.

All live sporting events shown.

Port & Anchor

2-4 Albion Hill, Ramsgate T: 01843 850493

During all major Football Matches – Fosters,
John Smiths and Strongbow all £2 per pint.

Red Lion

1 King Street, Ramsgate T: 01843 586713

The Royal

51 Harbour Parade, Ramsgate T: 01843 599599

Thursday Nights Live Bands: Drinks £1 for Vodka,
Whisky, Brandy & Gin with mixer.
Friday Nights: All drinks £2.50 and free bar for
ladies between 9pm and 10.30pm.
Saturday Nights: Open until 3am All drinks £2.50
9pm-11pm Strictly over 21s.
Sunday Nights: 90s Night. All drinks £1.50
between 9pm and 11pm.
Monday Nights: Karaoke and all bottled drinks £2.

South Eastern

11 Margate Road, Ramsgate T: 01843 593880

Live football, Cricket and Rugby shown. Karaoke
every weekend.

St Lawrence

The High Street, St Lawrence T: 01843 592337

Wig & Pen

10 Market Place, Margate T: 01843 231180

LIVE MUSIC

January
Sat 24th Kerry 8 – midnight
Sat 31st Highlander

Karaoke every Friday from 7:45pm

Punch & Judy

50 Marine Terrace, Margate T: 01843 231006

Wednesday, Friday & Saturday, Admission – £1
Wednesday: DJs all night. All drinks £1.20 9pm-10pm.
All drinks £1.50 10pm-11pm.
All drinks £1.70 11pm-12am.

Thursday: Admission £2.00 Drinks £1.50 all night
Karaoke & Nintendo Wii Games Night
Friday & Saturday: £1.20 drinks 8.30pm-10.30pm.

Escape

49 – 51 Marine Terrace T: 01843 232025

Open Friday & Saturday nights
Friday – The Recession Session 9.30pm – 3am (ish)
All drinks £1 B 4 11pm. £2 11 – 12pm. £2.50 till close.
Saturday – 10pm – 3am. £5 admission B 4 Midnight
All drinks £1 10pm – 11pm. £2.50 11 – Midnight.
DJ Toby Middleton.
Under 18's

HOTELS

Fayreness Hotel

Marine Drive, Kingsgate T: 01843 868641

Oak Hotel

66 Harbour Parade, Ramsgate T: 01843 583686

The Oak Hotel first floor Tiffany Suite idyllically
situated overlooking the Royal Ramsgate
Harbour. The Tiffany Suite is the ideal venue for
your Valentines Day with high ceilings, sporting
stunning chandeliers and a balcony with views
across the Marina. The Tiffany Suite offers the
perfect mix of classic elegance and
cosmopolitan style.

3 Course Menu – £14.95 per person

Why not stay the night in a Sea Facing room. 3
courses and B&B for £90!

Pegwell Bay Hotel

81 Pegwell Road, Pegwell Village, Ramsgate
T: 01843 599590

Live entertainment & carvery. £22.00 3 courses

Hotel De Ville

45 Grange Road, Ramsgate T: 01843 592289

Showing all live Premiership action on our big
screen & plasmas.

Atlantis

Harbour Parade, Ramsgate T: 01843 581582

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THANET SHOPPING

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The Hythe Imperial's packages start from £99 for a one-day spa break. Call 01303 267441 or see www.mercure.com.

Stretch yourself to ease those aches and pains

IF the thought of heading back to the gym fills you with dread, yoga could be the new hobby for you this year.

As well as increasing flexibility and promoting relaxation, yoga has been shown to alleviate the symptoms of common complaints such as backache, PMS, IBS, anxiety, insomnia and stress.

The Yoga Sanctuary in Barham is a designated yoga space, designed by teachers Cheryl Rivers and Caroline Bindon-Blood. Call 01227 720061 or 01227 711258 or visit www.theyoga-sanctuary.co.uk.

Follow the sergeant's orders and shed pounds

BURN off those mince pies the army way and meet new people with British Military Fitness.

As the UK's largest outdoor fitness provider, BMF offers the chance to get fit and lose weight with their open-air classes which feature running, circuit activities and team challenges. Ex-army fitness instructors run the 60-minute classes. BMF runs in Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells and offers free trial sessions. See www.britmilfit.com.

Step up to the exercise challenge with DVDs

SHAPE up in celebrity style with fitness DVDs from singer Claire Richards and Loose Women star Coleen Nolan.

Former Steps star Richards lost five stone and went down five dress sizes with her 5 Step Fat Attack.

Or try Nolan's Disco Burn. Having lost three stone last year for Rosemary Conley's Brand New You DVD, she has now lost a further two by dancing and grooving.

Both DVDs are priced at £19.99.

Pamper your mind and body and feel good

BEAT the January blues with sumptuous mood-boosting products from L'Occitane.

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YOUR TV REVIEW

OZ AND JAMES DRINK TO BRITAIN
BBC Two, 8pm, Tuesday
DANCING ON ICE
ITV1, 7pm, Sunday

BY TOM BETTS

WHEN James May lolled his way onto our screens a few years ago he hardly seemed the domineering type.

But it's hard to escape 'Captain Slow' these days and difficult to turn on the TV without seeing that slightly bemused expression peering back at you from behind one of the country's worst haircuts.

From his 20th Century show, to Top Toys, Big Ideas and, of course, Top Gear, which led him to stardom, May is everywhere.

His meteoric rise has echoed Richard Hammond's, who could also fill an entire channel with his shows.

Both are no doubt laughing all the way to the bank.

May's latest show sees him once more teaming up with Oz Clarke, the slightly over-the-top wine expert, to get drunk.

Unlike the last adventures when these two lucky chaps set out on Oz and James's Big Wine Adventure (undoubtedly inspired by the excellent film Sideways) the focus this time is more on brilliant beers than blinding Bordeaux.

The pair will travel through Britain and Ireland to marvel at all things alcoholic in a 1982 Rolls Royce Corniche. Nice work if you can get it.

The two previous series were an enjoyable enough romp as the scruffy May was time and again upstaged by the Clarke palette, leading to much entertaining alcohol-fuelled bickering, so expect more of the same this time around.



ON ICE: With Celebrity Big Brother already clogging up our schedules, brace yourself for yet more reality telly with Dancing On Ice

Just when you thought it was safe to return to the sofa on a weekend night, after the seemingly endless run of The X Factor and Strictly Come Dancing, ITV deals us all a real hammer blow in scheduling the return of Dancing On Ice.

The whole shebang is another celebrity-led affair, of course, and I fear TV channels have long since given up with the general public.

Hollyoaks nearly-man Jeremy Edwards, EastEnders' Todd Carty and various other soap nobodies will prance around on the slippery stuff for the agonisingly long 12-week run while rink royalty Torvill and Dean will once more be tormentors-in-chief.

The main talking point of the series last year was the plunging neckline of Holly Willoughby's frocks, which says a lot for the 90 minutes of actual skating offered up each week.

The nightmare begins on Sunday. Don't know about you, but I'm bored of 2009 already.

YOUR WEEK'S HOROSCOPE

BY RUSSELL GRANT



AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19)

YOUR star is on the rise. Don't be surprised if you are given an important leadership position. People respect your ideas and are willing to follow your advice. Improving a school, house of worship, or cultural institution may take up the lion's share of your time this year.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Aquarius** 09067-531762



TAURUS (Apr 21-May 21)

2009 promises to be one of the best years ever career-wise. Opportunities related to broadcasting, computers, or airline travel are looking good. You could also find a good position related to education, travel, or publishing. If you'd like to break into another industry ask a friend.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Taurus** 09067-531753



LEO (Jul 24-Aug 23)

THERE'S never been a better year to get married or start a business. Two heads are better than one. If you join finances with somebody, your fortune will increase. If you're single, this would be good time to consult a money manager. News regarding a job could reach your ears.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Leo** 09067-531756



SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22)

SUPPORT from friends and family helps you make several breakthroughs. Don't be afraid to get counselling for a problem. Putting this issue to rest will liberate you. Romance could burst into flower this week. You're especially drawn to a shy artist who is quite spiritual.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Scorpio** 09067-531759



PISCES (Feb 20-Mar 20)

IT may feel as if you're surrounded by a protective shield this year. While others have problems you seem to be riding high without a care in the world. Starting this week, you'll have more time for hobbies. Ask your partner how they see your future and start making plans.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Pisces** 09067-531763



GEMINI (May 22-Jun 22)

AN opportunity to expand your horizons will come your way. Going back to school, writing a book, or living abroad could be in the cards. It's possible your job will prompt this venture. You may be hesitant to make such a move. Eventually, though, you'll enjoy this turn of events.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Gemini** 09067-531754



VIRGO (Aug 24-Sep 23)

IF you ever wanted to start your own business, this is the year to do it. You'll find clients at every turn. If you fulfil your responsibilities you will reach a new level of professional success. When your knees threaten to buckle under your responsibilities, turn to a loved one.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Virgo** 09067-531757



SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21)

TAKING or teaching a class will lend insight to philosophical matters. It's possible you'll adopt a religious philosophy or spiritual outlook. Repainting a drab room could make a tremendous difference to your mood. Your leadership ability could help you land a lucrative job.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Sagittarius** 09067-531760



ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 20)

SPENDING more time on solitary pleasures will help you recover from a hectic festive season. Friends will assume an increased importance in your life. When you feel overwhelmed ask your loved ones for help. They'll be happy to help. Open your heart and be receptive.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Aries** 09067-531752



CANCER (Jun 23-Jul 23)

YOUR love life gets a boost this year. You could meet someone special at a house of worship, adult classroom, or library. Keep your eyes open for an offbeat rebel with a generous spirit. If you're in a relationship, 2009 is a good time to make a major change in your home or career.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Cancer** 09067-531755



LIBRA (Sep 24-Oct 23)

THIS week kicks off a period of fun, romance, and adventure. It's possible that you'll be able to mix business with pleasure. When you have a little extra money, invest it in your wardrobe. When you look good, you feel good. A relative may be poised to give you the financing.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Libra** 09067-531758



CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20)

YOUR income is in for a boost. A rise helps you afford luxuries previously beyond reach. Be sure to spend a portion of your cash on an overseas trip. A love letter or birthday message puts a spring in your step. Don't hesitate to propose bold plans. You never know who is listening.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Capricorn** 09067-531761

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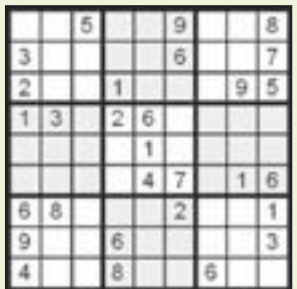
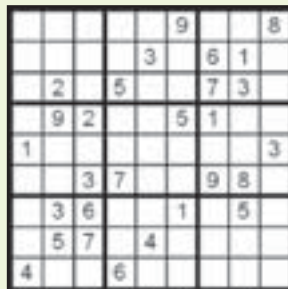


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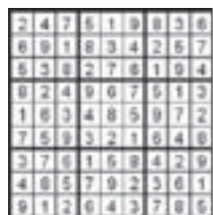
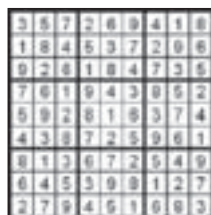
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HARD



- 1 Unpleasant familiar illusion (4,2)
- 2 Food of the gods (8)
- 3 Man appointed by testator (8)
- 4 Frozen (4)
- 5 Hanging bed (7)
- 6 Postings (anag.) (8)
- 7 Extracting from open excavation (9)
- 13 Sweetener (5)
- 14 Tall silk hat (9)
- 16 Easily tricked (8)
- 18 Sound of a clock (4-4)
- 19 Rotating (8)
- 20 Pepper (7)
- 22 Fourscore and ten (6)
- 25 Heehaw (4)

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Quarrying 13 Sugar 14 Storepale 16
Gullible 18 Tick-tock 19 Spinning 20
Cayenne 22 Ninety 25 Bray.

Answers to all of this week's quizzes can be found on our website

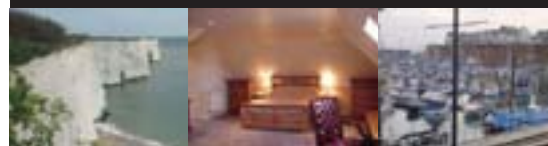
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Sunny side up on slopes

■ BY HANNAH STEPHENSON

YOU'VE booked a family skiing trip and one of your children is taken ill the night before departure. What do you do?

You could cancel, claim the insurance and wait for next year. Or you could all go and risk your child becoming worse in a foreign country. No thanks.

My husband drew the short straw and stayed at home to look after our son, while I took our eight-year-old daughter, Grace, to the slopes.

So it was to become a girls' holiday with a difference. And it got me thinking about whether a ski holiday is suitable for lone parents and whether you can truly enjoy the slopes alone while your children are off at ski school or busy with new friends.

I shouldn't have worried. We had chosen Alpe d'Huez, a family resort at 1,860 metres in the central French Alps, one of the five areas forming the Grandes Rousses massif, with links to Auris-en-Oisans, Oz-en-Oisans, Vaujany and Villard Reculas.

It is one of France's largest alpine resorts, also known as 'Île au Soleil' (Island of the Sun) as almost all the slopes are south-facing and it boasts an average 300 sunny days a year. We went during the school holidays and found plenty of snow and few queues.



FIRST RESORT: Alpe d'Huez in the French Alps

My daughter was booked into the morning Whizz Kids club, run by Crystal, in which carers drop off and pick up your child from ski school, take them back to the hotel for lunch and play with them until you pick them up in the afternoon.

Some youngsters, it has to be said, didn't go lightly, despite desperate reassurances from their parents. But the Crystal staff were fantastic, cajoling the stragglers, drying the tears of reluctant children and skilfully persuading them up the mountain.

If you are a novice, the likelihood is you'll be in ski school anyway. But even as an intermediate, ski school is the best option for lone skiers. You make friends and the instructor

leads the way, so there's no worry about getting lost.

I was lucky to be staying in a family-oriented hotel: a casual environment where people readily struck up conversations about the pistes, the weather and the resort. You can take a book into the bar, but it's never long before you'll be closing it to talk to someone. Your children make friends, creating a link with other parents.

But there are other options in Alpe d'Huez if you don't want to ski all afternoon. We swam in the open-air pool and skated on the large ice-rink.

Like most French ski resorts, food and drink on the piste comes at a premium. A large plate of chips will cost you 4.50 euros, a slice of pizza will be a little less and a can of drink about 2.50 euros. But there are enough boulangeries and small supermarkets in the resort to allow you to make your own packed lunches.

Dining out is also fun in Alpe d'Huez. Grace and I loved L'Edelweiss, a cosy, traditional-looking restaurant with wooden tables and chairs which was packed every night.

It offered all the usual savoiie fare, including raclette, fondues, tartiflette (a bubbling mixture of cheese, bacon and onions) and some meats served sizzling on hot stones, accompanied by potatoes gratin dauphinoise and a variety of sauces.

Next year I hope the boys will be able to join us. But if not, the girls will just have to go it alone again.

FACT FILE:

Time difference	UK +1hr
Language	French
Capital	Paris
Population	66.4 million
Religion	Christian
Climate	Temperate
Currency	Euro (1.1 to £1 approx)

Travel details

• Hannah Stephenson travelled to Alpe d'Huez as a guest of Crystal Ski, which offers a week at the Club Hotel Les Cimes in Alpe d'Huez from £449 per adult, with limited free child places also available. Once free child places have gone, child prices start at £99. Package includes return flights ex-Gatwick, transfers and accommodation including breakfast, afternoon tea and cake, evening meals and free wine. Crystal reservations: 0871 231 2256 and www.crystalski.co.uk.

• Alpe d'Huez details: Crèche for children (six months to four years); fully-qualified nannies look after babies and children for six half- or full-day supervision, with or without lunch. Prices from £100 for six mornings or afternoons. Kids' Club (four to 11 years); offers three childcare choices, including ski school escort service, lunch and lunchtime supervision, six half- or full-day supervision. Prices from £85 for six mornings or afternoons (ski school escort service included with morning sessions).



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AUSTRALIA (12A)



A romantic action adventure, Australia tells the story of Lady Ashley, an English aristocrat who inherits a substantial cattle ranch in Northern Australia. When the ranch comes under threat, Lady Ashley reluctantly drives 2,000 head of cattle across hundreds of miles – accompanied by a ranch-hand.

YES MAN (12A)



Carl Allen finds his life in a constant rut, with no social life and few adventures. After an encounter with a motivational speaker, he embarks on a hilarious journey when he begins to say yes to everything. Based on the best-seller by Danny Wallace, Yes Man explores what one word can do to change your life forever.

CHE – PART ONE (15)



Award-winning director Steven Soderbergh brings the life story of Ernesto 'Che' Guevara to the big screen. In the first of a two-part work, Che is found working with Fidel Castro to co-ordinate the 1956 mission to take control of Cuba. On their journey to topple the dictatorship, they encounter massive support and forge life-long friendships.

Pair are in good spirits

BY KATE WHITING

SAMUEL L Jackson is humming a ditty and looks so happy with the world, it's impossible not to beam at him as he shakes my hand.

The 60-year-old actor has plenty of reasons to be content. For a start, he's sitting next to the ever-glamorous Scarlett Johansson and he's just been honoured with a prestigious American Cinematheque Award for his contribution to movies.

Today, at a luxurious London hotel, he's in an ebullient mood. He's very enthusiastic about his latest film role in the daringly comic-like film adaptation of Will Eisner's *The Spirit*.

Samuel plays *The Octopus*, a deeply disturbed scientist and master of the criminal underworld, while 24-year-old Scarlett is his sexy sidekick Silken Floss.

It's clear from the way the pair are so relaxed and chatty with each other that they forged a strong friendship on set.

"We definitely enjoyed ourselves," says Scarlett, flashing Sam a cheeky smile.

"Amazingly we'd only see each other at award shows, but the moment we got on the plane together leaving LA, we kind of went 'Right, we're going to have a good time'," explains Sam.

"We just looked at each other and smiled and laughed and I thought 'OK, I like her'. We connected immediately and we had a good time every day. No matter what kind of time anyone else was having, we had a good time."

The Spirit tells the story of Denny Colt (played by newcomer Gabriel Macht), a murdered policeman who has mysteriously come back to life as the masked



ADAPTED: Scarlett Johansson, Samuel L Jackson and Eva Mendes star in *The Spirit*

crime-fighter, *The Spirit*. He has just one goal in mind, keeping his beloved Central City safe from villains like *The Octopus*, but he still finds time for a string of beautiful women who either want to love or kill him.

With Sin City creator and director Frank Miller at the helm, Sam and Scarlett were given free rein to play around with their baddie image, particularly because their characters were only roughly

sketched out in Will Eisner's original 40s comic.

We're used to seeing Sam tackling a range of character-driven roles in films ranging from *Pulp Fiction* to *Snakes On A Plane*. But it's unusual to see Scarlett, who made her name through a mix of indie films and costume dramas, in such a quirky role.

The Octopus and *Silken* go through an incredible number of costume changes – one minute

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they're a samurai warrior and geisha and the next Scarlett's in a very revealing nurse's outfit with curly white wig.

"A lot of times you're a character like a journalist, for instance, and you don't have the opportunity to be all costumed and glamorous and really play with different looks," the actress explains.

"I was really inspired by the golden age of Hollywood, by Lucille Ball and other actresses from the 40s. I wanted to play with that film noir look. But you're not necessarily conscious of it while you're working. It's something you do and when the director says 'Wow, you look fabulous', you're like 'Yes, that two hours in hair and make-up was worth it!'"

Next year Scarlett will be back on screen with Jennifer Aniston and Drew Barrymore in *He's Not That Into You*, while Sam has just finished 'torturing' Michael Sheen in the thriller *Unthinkable*.

But before then the pair celebrated the festive season at home in the States with their families – Sam with his wife of 28 years Latanya and their daughter Zoe – and Scarlett with her new husband, actor Ryan Reynolds.



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MADAGASCAR – ESCAPE 2 AFRICA (PG)
Sat, Sun (12.40*) sharp
CENTURY SCREEN
Kate Winslet, Ralph Fiennes
THE READER (15) (2.30 Sat, Sun, Wed), 5.20, 8pm
INKHEART (PG) Sat, Sun (12.20*) sharp
BIJOU SCREEN
AUSTRALIA (12A) (3.30 Sat, Sun, Wed), (4.20 Fri, Mon), 7.40
1 use strong language, moderate war violence & injury
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PROPERTY NEWS

House prices will continue their downward path, predict experts

HOUSE prices fell by an average of 8.7 per cent last year and are likely to plunge a further 12 per cent in 2009, property information firm Hometrack has claimed.

The company's research director, Richard Donnell, warned of further price falls to come as rising unemployment forces more sellers into the market.

"The onset of recession and the prospect of rising unemployment will continue to dampen confidence and in turn demand, which will inevitably lead to further house price falls over the next 12 months," he said.

Properties in south-east England were the hardest hit, according to Hometrack's survey of more than 1,800 estate agents and surveyors across the country.

But the biggest average price fall in 2008 was in London – a slump of 10.1 per cent.

In December, Britain's biggest provider of home loans said house prices fell by a record 14.9 per cent in the three months to November, compared with a year earlier.

The average price of a house in Britain stood at £163,605 said Halifax, which is part of HBOS.

Deposit scheme for first-time buyers

FIRST-time buyers could have their deposits paid for them by the Government under proposals to boost the housing market.

A new scheme could see 18,000 first-time buyers earning under £60,000 offered interest-free Government loans to cover their deposits.

Up to 30 per cent of the value of a property could be borrowed.

The Government claims this means a first-time buyer could purchase a house worth £180,000 for as little as £126,000.

However, the scheme has led to criticism that it will drop first-time buyers into negative equity as house prices are falling.

The last lender to offer 100 per cent mortgages – Abbey – dropped its range in April.

Time to block out the economic chill



POSITIVE OUTLOOK: Pines Calyx at St Margaret's Bay is showing the way ahead in energy efficiency, but many homes in the South East still have a long way to go

■ BY NICK AMES

SOME 74 per cent of homes in the South East need energy efficiency improvements, according to a new survey.

Almost three-quarters of people say their homes are in need of energy efficiency improvements with fuel bills are set to rocket this winter, says a poll commissioned by the National Housing Federation.

However, the survey also shows that while the majority say their home would benefit from measures such as draught-proofing around windows and doors or better loft insulation, fewer than half plan to take the necessary action.

Despite 36 per cent of respondents agreeing they need a more energy-efficient boiler, for example, only eight per cent said they would be installing one in the next 12 months.

Energy-saving lightbulbs fared better, however, with about one in four respondents saying they would install them over the next year.

While the latest Government figures show

that 291,000 households in the region are officially 'fuel poor', spending more than ten per cent of disposable income on gas and electricity bills, these new figures raise concerns that many across the South East will receive much higher fuel bills this winter.

The average household is now spending about £1,300 a year on gas and electricity.

The National Housing Federation's regional manager for the South East, Warren Finney, said: "Energy-inefficient homes are bad for the environment and bad for fuel bills.

"The results of this poll show the Government still faces a battle to win people over to the idea of investing in energy efficiency.

"Ministers need to look at practical ways of encouraging people to invest in energy efficiency. Slashing the VAT charged on products such as energy-efficient boilers to five per cent would make a real difference for people wanting to do the right thing for the environment

and benefit from lower prices." In the meantime, the National Housing Federation has top tips for people who need to save cash while staying warm this winter:

- Properly insulating your home can save up to £400 a year in fuel bills.

Cavity wall insulation which usually costs about £500 will save £150 to £200 per year, paying for itself within two to three years. Many households are now able to get this done at a subsidised rate or for free.

Loft insulation is generally easy to do yourself and costs about £100 to £300, depending on your home. It could save you up to £200 in the first year.

- DIY draught-proofing can make a big difference. Sealant tape for windows and doors, brushes or seals for your letterbox and door, and a draught excluder, would cost about £40. You could make that back within the first year.

- Turning off lights, switching off appliances rather than leaving them on standby, and using heating controls properly are all cost-free ways of saving energy.

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MOTORS NEWS



SMC's smack in the eye for the recession

KENT dealer group SMC has kicked off 2009 with a recession-busting sale at its Ford and Mitsubishi outlets with savings of more than £15,000 possible against list prices on new cars and many bargains on used stock.

There will also be a prize draw for customers who take advantage of the 'Great SMC Sale' running until January 31.

They could win a large LCD television, Apple iPod Touch or an X-Box 360 games console, with the draw to be held on February 18.

Ford's line-up has just had a further upgrade with the all-new Fiesta (pictured) and also includes the Focus – the UK's no1 seller – the latest Mondeo family model plus award-winning MPVs: the C-Max, sporty S-Max and spacious Galaxy people carrier.

SMC has sites at Crayford, Gravesend and Sittingbourne.



Fiat gadget helps drivers cut costs and emissions

FIAT claims thousands of motorists using its eco:Drive fuel-saving advice device since launch in October, have saved more than 163,000kg of CO2.

The free-of-charge tool helps drivers understand and adjust the impact of their driving style on fuel consumption and CO2 emissions.

Using a USB stick plugged into the car's dashboard, eco:Drive records detailed information about the vehicle and how it is driven, which can be uploaded on to a computer (see picture). It then gives an analysis of the driver's performance, along with suggestions on how to improve efficiency further by improving driving methods.

"eco:Drive offers real benefits, helping drivers improve driving efficiency, saving fuel and reducing their impact on the environment," says Andrew Humberstone of Fiat Group Automobiles UK.

People using eco:Drive can become part of eco:Ville, an online community. Members have used it to offer ideas and feedback over the last three months, which Fiat has responded to – already the company has released four enhanced versions of the system.

Next year eco:Drive will become available for use in the Fiat Bravo and Qubo – it already features in Fiat 500 and Grande Punto models – and there are plans to further widen the scope of the technology across the entire range.



PRESSURE IS ON: The new Vauxhall Corsa is giving the Fiesta a run for its money with sharper styling and elements to appeal to a variety of supermini buyers

Strong Corsa is out to spoil Fiesta-time

BRITAIN'S supermini race tends to be a two-horse tussle between the Ford Fiesta and Vauxhall Corsa and the latter might be expected to be under pressure now from the all-new Ford.

But don't jump to conclusions; the Vauxhall has been exceptionally dominant while waiting for the new generation Ford and won't be giving ground easily.

The Corsa is more sharply styled than before and can court different categories of buyer: the low slung three-door attracts younger buyers, while the smart yet more practical five-door caters for families and older customers.

Where the old Corsa had also started to look low rent inside, against supermini rivals and newer Vauxhall models, the latest is a paragon of quality, using high grade materials and brighter interior colours and trims.

The steering wheel is adjustable for height and reach on most models, the seats are higher quality and the dash is attractive and well-organised. Underlining the car's youthful

ROAD TEST VAUXHALL CORSA

BY STEVE LOADER

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Green rating	★★★★★

appeal, there is also an MP3 audio connection on most models.

Leg, shoulder and headroom front and rear has increased across the board and Vauxhall claims the cabin is one of the quietest in its class, with reduced NVH (noise, vibration and harshness). Having driven several versions now, I can't argue with that and the car handles and rides in a much tidier fashion than of old too – there is even a cracking little VXR 'pocket rocket' model.

As more of us downsize in search of greener motoring or convenience, the new Corsa also falls into what I call the 'supersize-me-mini' segment, typified by the latest Renault Clio, Fiat Punto and Peugeot 207. These bigger superminis deliver greater crash protection and retain some big car comforts for owners seeking to reduce both their physical and carbon footprint on the roads.

The 1.4 Club is the best seller – Club is the mid-range trim above Expression and Life, while the 1.4i petrol engine delivers a balance of economy, power and refinement. But it is the SXi tested here (list price £10,550) that cuts a dash with its sporty looks and smart alloys as standard.



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USED CAR ROUND-UP: OUR PICK FROM A KEY SECTOR

USED SMALL SUPERMINI/MPVS

SO successful has been the MPV (multi-purpose vehicle) or 'people carrier' concept that its influence has carried over to other car sectors. None more so than superminis, where designs are tending to be taller and more flexible, with 'smart' seating arrangements, extra headroom and load-lugging ability. None of the trio here would win styling prizes, but such versatility comes as standard and they are probably the closest to being the market's 'jacks of all trades'. After several years on the market, affordable examples should be easy to find too.

carsforrent.co.uk

VAUXHALL MERIVA



NOT quite as influential as Vauxhall's bigger Zafira perhaps, but the Meriva has become a popular used buy with families seeking a manageable yet capacious family holdall. The car drives and handles well and offers a higher driving position than equivalent family hatches and estates, without being ridiculously lofty. Add Vauxhall's usual versatile 'Flex' system interior features, a reputation for reliability and a good range of engines including diesels and you can see why Meriva used prices can be high.

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

HONDA JAZZ



HONDA'S Jazz has definitely hit the right note and won a host of awards. Beware early examples, which were too firmly sprung for some tastes, but later models are good to drive and better to ride in while retaining cheeky looks and versatile rear seating. The range lacks a diesel, but offers a continuously variable automatic gearbox (CVT) option with pre-selected positions that are reassuring to use, while bringing all the benefits of a CVT auto's better fuel consumption.

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

NISSAN NOTE



NISSAN threw the rule book away with the Note to create a partial replacement for its long-running yet unloved Almera family hatchback, while also acquiring a small MPV with a more compact stance. The result is a versatile, roomy and manageable small car with lots of clever features including a reversible boot floor that covers a spacious lower compartment. The Note's engines are also good news, with a Renault-supplied 1.5-litre turbodiesel the most desirable, for mixing power with economy.

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

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(Maternity Cover - 30 hours per week, term-time) Salary: £17,861 - £22,907 pro-rata

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For an informal discussion about the post phone Anne Lowry on 07934 508100.

Ref: CFE/08/0650

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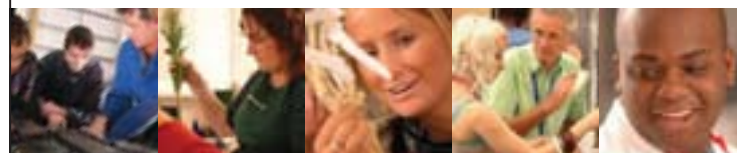
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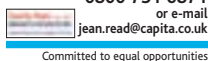
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In accordance with Rule 4.106, we give notice that on 22 December 2008 Julie P. Vahey and Graham P. Petersen of Benedict Mackenzie LLP, 5-6 The Courtyard, East Park, Crawley, West Sussex, were appointed Joint Liquidators of Hurley's Security Limited by resolutions of members and creditors. Notice is hereby given that the creditors of the above named company, which is being voluntarily wound up, are required, on or before 26 January 2009 to send in their full Christian and surnames, their addresses and descriptions, full particulars of their debts or claims, and the names and addresses of their Solicitors (if any), to the undersigned Julie P. Vahey of 5-6 The Courtyard, East Park, Crawley, West Sussex, the Joint Liquidator of the said company, and, if so required by notice in writing from the said Joint Liquidator, are, personally or by their solicitors, to come in and prove their debts or claims at such time and place as shall be specified in such notice, or in default thereof they will be excluded from the benefit of any distribution. Dated: 22 December 2008 Julie P. Vahey, Joint Liquidator

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BUSINESS BRIEFS

Westwood's admirers vote with their feet

SHOPPERS have given Westwood Cross a vote of confidence in the latest survey by Business Blueprints.

Research reveals that 99 per cent of shoppers rate cleanliness at the retail centre as good or very good, 95 per cent feel the centre is safe and secure and 94 per cent value the pleasant atmosphere.

And despite worries about the economy, shoppers are spending eight per cent more this year on non-food items than last spring.

The centre is also attracting more shoppers from farther afield, in particular from Canterbury and Whitstable.

Of Thanet shoppers, 16 per cent said they also visited Bluewater, compared with 61 per cent last year.

Marketing manager Tracie Stevens said the centre was making an increasing contribution to the local economy.

Art meets commerce

A COLLABORATION between the arts and business has taken off at West Malling's Kings Hill business park.

It entails the launch of works by south east artists in the site's office buildings.

New works will be shown every three months, preceded by a private viewing when people from the wider business community will be able to see them.

Caroline Binns, of developer Liberty Property Trust UK, said: "The aim is to brighten people's working day by creating a welcoming and stimulating environment."

Liberty founded the Rouse Kent Public Art Award with KCC for the best piece of public art in the county. The biennial award will be held this year.

Channel trade seminar

NEWCRÉATIF, a virtual design and communication agency based in Folkestone and Canterbury, held another seminar on design and communication issues for firms trading in France.

The seminar, at the Ramada Hotel, Dover, was attended by more than 25 local government and businesses delegates from both sides of the Channel.

It is one of a series of events organised by Transmanche Technology over the last 18 months. All are aimed at improving trade between companies based in Kent and northern France.



CHEER UP! Despite the impact of the credit crunch, Kent is well positioned to take advantage of any imminent recovery, with many firms in the county still performing well

Our glass is half-full

■ BY TONY PATEY

EVEN economic downturns have their silent majorities – more than half of companies in Kent say they are either unaffected by the current slowdown or are performing well and growing.

And a fifth are confident of a recovery in the coming months. This is proof that, while it's the public duty of the media to report what is going on, there is always another side of the coin that needs polishing.

The Financial and Business Services Survey 2008 commissioned by investment promotion agency Locate in Kent shows that almost a quarter of companies feel prospects are better for being based in Kent rather than elsewhere in the UK.

When asked how the economic climate was impacting on their business, encouragingly, almost a third – 29 per cent – reported that

they were still performing well and growing.

Just under half of respondents felt that their businesses had suffered as a result of economic downturn, and a further quarter responded that it had no impact.

Companies in the business services sector seemed to be faring better in this economic climate, with 36 per cent performing well, compared with 22 per cent in the financial sector.

The majority of respondents were realistic about the potential consequences of the global economic crisis, with 57 per cent concerned about their business over the next two years.

However, almost a third of respondents were confident their business would grow over the next few years.

One in five respondents felt confident about a recovery in the coming months.

When asked the biggest issue that compa-

nies would face once the economic outlook improved, respondents cited fears of cash flow problems and the cost of finance, lack of client and consumer confidence, red tape and legislation and the possibility of a slow recovery in the housing market.

Paul Wookey, chief executive of Locate in Kent, said: "These results are not surprising given that we cannot get away from the hard economic truths we are facing."

"However, there are some very encouraging results from this report. The fact that Kent's location and solid transport links were so positively rated gives us good reason to be optimistic about the future."

"The improved links to central London will serve the county well as it looks to leverage opportunities such as the 2012 Olympics."

"Access to international markets will become an essential lifeline for a number of companies, underlining the importance of transport links in terms of business location choice."

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What a difference a year makes for Kirk



NO REPEAT: Kirk Shepherd failed to repeat his world championship heroics

KIRK Shepherd's dreams of eclipsing his fairytale run to the final of the PDC World Championship were shot down in flames as he was dumped out of the first round at Alexandra Palace.

The 22-year-old, from Ramsgate, made it all the way to the final last year where he was eventually beaten by Canadian John Part.

He beat seasoned professionals such as Peter Manley and Wayne Mardle along the way, but his luck ran out in the first round this year as he lost to Dutchman Jan van der Rassel 3-2.

Having beaten van der Rassel twice already last year, Shepherd went into last Tuesday's first-round match with confidence, but he never looked at his best at the oche and was always playing

DARTS

catch up against the wily Dutchman.

A feature of Shepherd's run last year was his ability to come back when it appeared he was beaten and it looked as though he was going to do just that as van der Rassel took a 2-1 lead into the deciding set.

After the Young Gun bent the wire of double 14 attempting a check out of 105, the Dutchman had three darts to take the match.

He couldn't hold his nerve, however, and that let Shepherd back in to level the game at 2-2.

It went right down to the wire as the final set went down to the last leg but

Shepherd was unable to produce the darts of last year as he was forced to exit at the first time of asking.

Shepherd said in an interview after the match that he is contemplating returning to work and giving up his professional status in the sport.

He said: "I am sick. I had a couple of chances to get myself into the match but I blew it."

"I think I'm going to go back to work – I'm not sure what I'm going to do, but I've had so many ups and downs over the last year and it hasn't done me any favours."

"I've earned about £15,000 in prize money on the circuit since I joined the PDC full-time, and I won £50,000 for reaching the final – but you soon go through it."

Young swimmers get New Year off to a flier

THANET Swim Club dominated the proceedings at the third annual Winter 200 meeting at the Kingsmead Leisure Centre in Canterbury.

Louise Gates began the weekend with an impressive performance in the 400m individual medley.

The 15-year-old attacked the race a set a new personal best seven seconds quicker than her previous. The swim was good enough to earn top spot on the podium and the time was inside the national qualifying time.

Another national qualifying time was swum by 14-year-old Kelly Henson on her way to claiming a gold medal.

A total of 12 club records and 125 medals were amassed at the meeting.

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Villa boss Martin O'Neill says he would have been happy with FA Cup replay against Gills

Wanderers aiming to get back on right path

DARYL Vas's Thanet Wanderers are looking for their first league win since October when they resume their London 2 South season on Saturday.

Thanet travel to Tunbridge Wells hoping to avenge their narrow two-point defeat in November.

The first half of the season started well for the Wanderers with wins against Maidstone and Old Colfeians, but since November they have struggled, losing their last four league games.

Two points for the Wanderers could move them to within a point of third bottom side Beckenham.

PLEASE SEND YOUR SPORTS STORIES TO SPORTS EDITOR GLENN PEARSON AT glenn.pearson@kosmedia.co.uk



SPIRITED: Margate were unable to prevent Ryman Premier leaders Dover from marching on in front of the biggest crowd of the season at Hartsdown Park

Pictures SIMON HARRIS

Gritty Blues fail to put a dent in Dover title charge

FOOTBALL

Margate 0

Dover Athletic 2

Welford 19, 34



Margate starting XI



Subs used: Stubbs (Young 38), Masade (Healey 60), Takaloo (Savage 67)

DESPITE a spirited second-half fightback, Terry Yorath's Margate were unable to halt Dover Athletic's charge towards the Ryman Premier League title and have slipped deeper into the relegation zone.

A feisty east Kent derby produced Margate's biggest crowd of the season, with 1,339 cramming into Hartsdown Park.

However, the game was wrapped up after two first-half goals from Shaun Welford, but on another day Gate could easily have snatched a draw at the death.

After a disappointing 2-0 Isle derby defeat last time out, Gate knew they would have to perform to their best to get anything from the meeting with the Ryman Premier's runaway leaders.

Yorath made two changes, with Reggie Savage and Joe Healey replacing the suspended Aaron Quain and Mo Takaloo.

Margate started the brighter of the two sides and had the best of the early exchanges, creating the first opening when Jackson Ohakam fired over the bar on eight minutes.

The game changed once Dover settled and Andy Hesselthaler's side took the lead on 19 minutes when Welford headed Sammy Moore's corner into the net via the crossbar.

The goal gave Dover confidence and they doubled their advantage 14 minutes later thanks to Welford's left-footed drive.

Margate struggled to contain Dover, who almost made it 3-0 when Olly Schulz's header cannoned off the crossbar.

Dover sat back in the second half and allowed Margate to try to find a way back into the game. Yorath introduced Takaloo and Ebenezer Masade, and the change seemed to give Gate renewed spark up front.

As the game entered the final quarter,

Margate increased their efforts to find a goal and caused the Dover defence problems.

First, Liam Harwood's header was saved by Whites goalkeeper David Wilkinson, then Takaloo had two headers cleared off the line by a panicky Dover defence.

However, this was as close as Margate came to scoring and even with Dover down to ten men following Welford's dismissal at the death, the Blues were unable to find a way through.

With Ramsgate getting a point at Tonbridge Angels and Hendon winning, Margate have slipped into the bottom two.

Rams get out of drop zone in Nick of time

FOOTBALL

Tonbridge Angels 2

Legge 40, Rook 62

Ramsgate 2

Tsangarides 80, Davis 90 + 6



RAMSGATE moved out of the Ryman Premier League's relegation zone thanks to Nick Davis's last-gasp equaliser at Longmead.

The Rams centre back netted in the sixth minute of injury time on Saturday, to salvage a point for Jim Ward's side that took them out of the bottom three.

It was no more than they deserved and they could have even won the game had they have put away their chances in the first half.

The first chance of the game fell to Tonbridge's Tommy Tyne after five minutes but his shot narrowly missed the target following a strong run from midfield.

Disallowed

Ramsgate then had the ball in the back of the net after ten minutes but Steffan Ball's shot was disallowed for an infringement.

The visitors continued to dominate and Ball had another good shot which brought a superb save from Tonbridge goalkeeper Lee Worgan. Jay May had a couple of good chances, especially one where he was unmarked but just as he was going to shoot he slipped on the frosty surface.

Tonbridge managed to survive the Ramsgate onslaught and on 40 minutes opened the scoring against the run of play with a strong header from Leon Legge.

Ramsgate opened the second half strongly and Davis went close early on. However, the home side added a second just after the hour mark



Picture: IAN KIRKP

LAST-GASP EFFORT: Nick Davis's injury-time equaliser lifted Ramsgate out of the bottom three in the Ryman Premier

Ramsgate starting XI



Subs used: Brown (Schulz 60) Schooburgh (Pettit 60), Tsangarides (Hadden 79)

when Carl Rook poked the ball in from close range, this time from a Richard Westcott cross.

Tyne almost added a third but missed an easy chance and Ramsgate's keeper, Jamie Turner,

pulled off a fantastic save from an Anthony Storey free-kick.

Ramsgate were forced to step up a gear and Jay May almost pulled a goal back, but his shot flashed across the face of the goal.

Tom Tsangarides came on as substitute and with his first touch of the game he reduced the arrears with a well-taken goal, sliding the ball under Worgan.

Tonbridge tried to shut up shop and looked like they were going to secure the three points until Ward pushed four up front which had the desired effect and in the sixth minute of injury time, the Rams were awarded a free-kick just outside the area. Ball floated it into the area and after a goalmouth scramble, Davis was on hand to smash into the net.

FOOTBALL



Picture: DAVID STEWART

HALF-VOLLEY: Jay May's 25-yard shot secured victory

Rams barge through Gate

Ramsgate 2 Margate 0

TWO super strikes from Steffan Ball and Jay May ensured that it was Ramsgate who came out on top of the first Thanet derby of the year at the Southwood Stadium.

With both teams in the relegation zone, it was always going to be a must-win game for both sides.

By the end it was two goal-of-the-season contenders that won it for the Rams on Saturday, December 27.

It was as early as the fourth minute that the home side had their first chance, but it took a last-ditch tackle to stop Ball pulling the trigger.

Warren Schulz had a couple of good headers that went just wide of the post and Ryan Royston saw his header cleared off the line by Liam Harwood after good work from Ben Laslett and May.

The Rams opened the scoring on 24 minutes when Ball was played out wide; he cut inside and let fly with a spectacular 30-yard rocket that flew into the top corner, giving Pat Mullin in the Margate goal no chance.

Ramsgate could have doubled their lead seven minutes later when Ben Brown found himself unmarked, but his shot went over.

Two minutes later, Ryan Peters almost broke through for Margate, but a well-timed tackle from the impressive Tom Wynter put a stop to it.

Just before half-time, ex-Ram Mo Takaloo had a good chance, but his header went over the bar.

Margate's only shot on target came in the 64th minute from Jackson Ohakam, but Ramsgate's Jamie Turner showed good hands on his debut, having signed from Blue Square South side Welling United.

The home side gave themselves a two-goal cushion in the 68th minute as Danny Walder pushed the ball out wide to substitute Andy Hadden. He laid on a perfect pass to May, who from 25 yards half-volleyed it over Mullin and saw it dip just under the crossbar to send the home fans delirious.

Nick Davis and Simon Pettit also went close for Rams, while Richard Shittu had a great chance for Margate on 87 minutes, only to put his shot wide of an open goal.

LEAGUE TABLE

RYMAN PREMIER DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pt
1 Dover Athletic	24	21	0	3	+34	63
2 Staines Town	20	13	4	3	+19	43
3 Tonbridge Angels	24	12	6	6	+16	42
4 Carshalton Athletic	22	11	5	6	+3	38
5 Maidstone United	23	11	3	9	+3	36
6 Canvey Island	24	10	5	9	+5	35
7 Sutton United	21	10	5	6	+3	35
8 Dartford	23	10	3	10	0	33
9 Wealdstone	23	9	4	10	+7	31
10 AFC Hornchurch	21	9	4	8	-1	31
11 Ashford Town (Mx)	22	10	0	12	-3	30
12 Billericay Town	20	8	6	6	-4	30
13 Horsham	21	9	2	10	-4	29
14 Boreham Wood	22	8	5	9	-4	29
15 Tooting & Mitcham	23	9	2	12	-6	29
16 Hastings United	23	9	1	13	-9	28
17 Harlow Town	21	7	3	11	-4	24
18 Ramsgate	25	5	8	12	-14	23
19 Harrow Borough	22	5	8	9	-17	23
20 Hendon	23	6	4	13	-2	22
21 Margate	24	6	4	14	-14	22
22 Heybridge Swifts	21	3	8	10	-8	17

FIXTURES

Saturday, January 10

Ryman Premier Division: Canvey Island v Margate, Ramsgate v Boreham Wood

Darts make Ramsgate pay for missed chances

Ramsgate 0 Dartford 1

IT was a case of missed chances at Southwood as the Rams ended 2008 with a disappointing home defeat to Kent rivals Dartford.

After winning local bragging rights in the Thanet derby with a 2-0 victory against Margate, Jim Ward's side went into the game hoping to record back-to-back wins for the first time this season.

The game, on December 30, started at a high tempo and it was the Rams who created the first opening when Ben Brown blasted over when in a good position.

In-form Dartford striker Cody McDonald sprung into life midway through the first half, but his effort was comfortably saved by on-loan goalkeeper Jamie Turner.

With the game looking increasingly likely to remain goalless at the break, Dartford struck. Tony Burman's side were awarded a free-kick on the edge of the area and Jamie Day hammered the ball into the net.

Ramsgate came out for the second half with something to prove and almost levelled the game through Ryan Royston. A Steffan Ball corner found the head of Royston, but he witnessed his effort crash against the post.

As Dartford cleared their lines McDonald threatened to extend the lead, but with just Turner to beat he fired wide.



Picture: DAVID STEWART

DISAPPOINTING: Ramsgate squandered too many chances during their home defeat against Dartford

Ramsgate continued to attack to find an equaliser which left the defence open to counter attack on numerous occasions. Dartford's Rob Haworth almost capitalised on the gaps in the defence, but he couldn't keep his shot on target.

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